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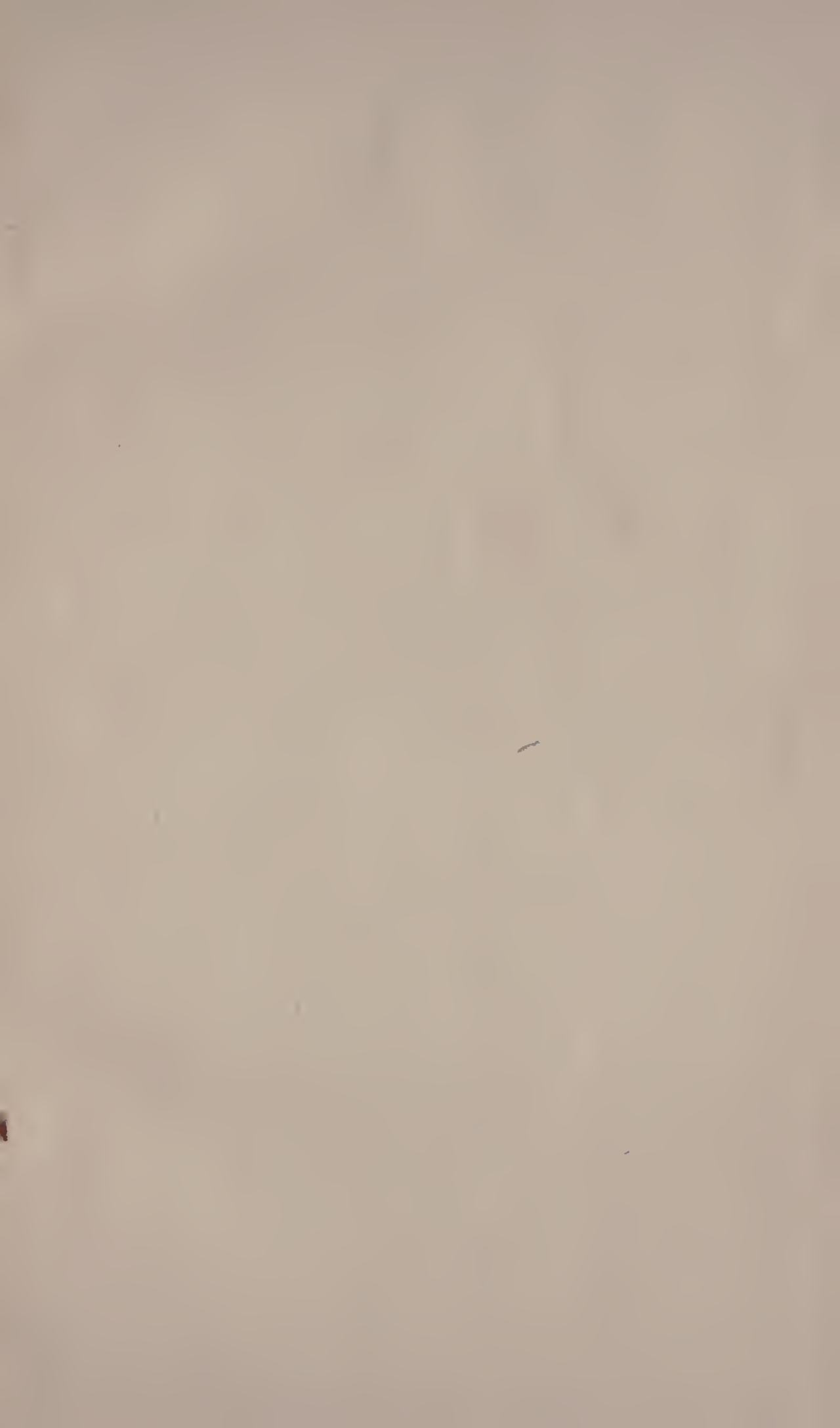
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# COMEDIES FOR CHILDREN.



BY  
EFFIE W. MERRIMAN.

CHICAGO  
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

BRADLEY DES



# CAPT. RACKET

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.

BY

Charles Townsend.

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## CHARACTERS.

CAPT. ROBERT RACKET, one of the National Guard. A lawyer when he has nothing else to do, and a liar all the time.....

*Comedy Lead.*

OBADIAH DAWSON, his uncle, from Japan "where they make tea".....

*Comedy Old Man.*

TIMOTHY TOLMAN, his friend, who married for money and is sorry for it.....

*Juvenile Man.*

MR. DALROY, his father in-law, a jolly old cove.....

*Eccentric.*

HOBSON, a waiter from the "Cafe Gloriana," who adds to the confusion.....

*Utility.*

CLARICE, the Captain's pretty wife, out for a lark, and up to "anything awful".....

*Comedy Lead.*

MRS. TOLMAN, a lady with a temper, who finds her Timothy a vexation of spirit.....

*Old Woman.*

KATY, a mischievous maid.....

*Soubrette.*

TOOTSY, the "Kid," Tim's olive branch.....

*Props.*

## SYNOPSIS.

ACT. I. Place: Tim's country home on the Hudson near New York. Time: A breezy morning in September. The Captain's fancy takes a flight and trouble begins.

ACT. II. Place: the same; Time: the next morning. How one yarn requires another. "The greatest liar unhung," Now the trouble increases and the Captain prepares for war.

ACT. III. Place: the same. Time: evening of the same day. More misery. A general muddle. "Dance or you'll die." Cornered at last. The Captain owns up. All serene.

Time of playing: Two hours.

**Order a sample copy, and see for yourself what a good play it is.**

# Comedies For Children

BY

EFFIE W. MERRIMAN

Author of "Diamonds and Hearts," "A Pair of Artists,"  
"Socials," Etc.

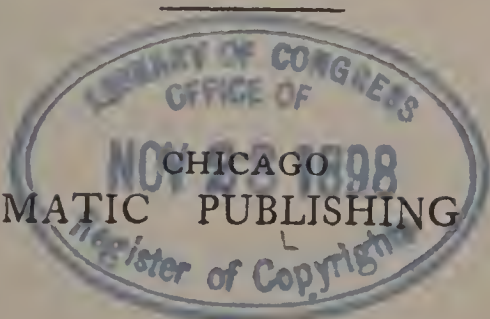
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A Collection of One-act Plays Written for Presentation  
in the Home or School-room, by the Children  
of the Family and their Friends

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## INTRODUCTION.

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It is as natural for a child to act as it is for him to breathe. Watch him while at play, and in nine cases out of ten, you will find that he is pretending to be other than he is. There are few children who, at some time during their childhood days, do not desire to act "real plays," and tease for something that is not beyond them, so far as stage accessories are concerned, for they never admit that they are not capable of acting anything that has ever been acted!

The plays in this little book were written for real children, who, like most children, must do their acting without a stage, and in the family sitting-room. They are so simple that the children can act them without the help from their elders, which will be a source of satisfaction to busy mothers.



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# THE DRUNKARD'S FAMILY.

---

## CAST OF CHARACTERS.

SADIE CLARK,—The drunkard's wife.

MR. CLARK,—The drunkard.

GEORGE, } —Their children.  
MAMIE, }

---

The following temperance play is easily produced, and may be made quite effective in a room where the children are allowed to have the materials for cooking, as suggested. If they wish to give it in a room where such things are not allowed, they will not find it difficult to think of something else they can do while speaking the lines.

Plays ten minutes.

---

[*Enter Mrs. Sadie Clark, with her sleeves rolled up. Her hair is tousled, and her gingham apron is a little damp, for she has been washing.*]

**Sadie.** I believe I was never so tired in my life. It was such a hard washing! [*Throws*

*herself into a wooden rocking chair, and passes her hand over her forehead, as if her head ached badly.]* I wonder if all the rest of my life is to be like this—hard work, poor pay—half starved children—a drunken husband. [*Bends forward, burying her face in her hands for a moment.*] And the drunken husband is responsible for all the rest.

[*Enter Mamie, her hat in her hand, and panting as if she had been running.*]

**Mamie.** Oh, mother, I'm promoted! I've got to have a new reader, a geography, and an arithmetic

[*Enter George, panting. Throws his hat to the ceiling, and catches it as he comes in.*]

**George.** I'm promoted, mother! Gee! but I've got to have a stack of books!

**Mamie.** [*Holding up one foot.*] And there are holes in my shoes, mother. The snow gets in awfully.

**George.** [*Holding up one foot.*] Pooh! Your shoes are better than mine are. Mother, can't I have new shoes.

**Mamie.** If George has new shoes, I'm going to have some, too!

[*Both children rush at Sadie as they talk, and catch hold of her hands, saying, "Can we have them? Can we have them?" She pushes them away and rises to her feet.*]

**Sadie.** Don't tease, children! I'm tired to death.

**Mamie.** [*Dancing in front of her.*] But, mother, we've got to have the books!

**George.** [*Dancing in front of her.*] Or else stay out of school.

**Sadie.** It is supper time, Mamie. Can't you set the table for me?

**Mamie.** Uh-huh. We'll talk about the books while we work. Come on, George. You've got to help.

**George.** [*Flinging himself into the rocking chair.*] Mother didn't say so.

[**Sadie** goes to the table at one end of the room, and begins to pare potatoes that have been placed there in a basin. **Mamie** catches **George** by the hand and tries to pull him out of the rocking chair.]

**Mamie.** He must help me, mustn't he, mother?

**George.** I don't have to, do I, mother?

**Sadie.** [*Talking to herself.*] On the whole, I believe I'll cook these potatoes without paring them. It is more economical. [*Turns her head, and sees the children struggling together.*] Children, if you don't behave yourselves, I'll whip you both in less than a minute!

**Mamie.** [*Running to table in centre of room, and beginning to clear off the newspapers scattered on it.*] I am behaving.

**George.** [*Straightening himself in the rocking chair.*] So am I.

**Sadie.** [*Getting cooking materials together.*] George, I guess you'll have just about time to run over to Mrs. Baldwin's and back before sup-

per. I want you to ask her for that dollar she owes me. If she pays me, I think we can get some of the books, if not all of them. [*Begins to make biscuit.*]

**Mamie.** [*Jumping into the air.*] Oh, that will be splendid. [*Spreads newspaper on table in place of table-cloth, then goes into other room, returning with dishes.*]

**George.** I'd rather have shoes, if I can't have both.

**Sadie.** You can't have both, just at present; but, if it is a possible thing, you must go on with your education. Now, run along like a good boy. [*Turns dough on the moulding board.*]

**Mamie.** [*Making a face at him as he passes.*] Hoo! hoo! hoo! Now, don't you wish you'd helped me? [*Laughs, and dodges, almost upsetting the dishes she is carrying.*]

**George.** [*Makes face, goodnaturedly, then laughs.*] Naw! Rather go to Baldwin's. [*Goes out of the door.*]

**Sadie.** Table nearly set, Mamie?

**Mamie.** [*Indignantly.*] Why, mother! Do you suppose I can do it in a minute? [*Goes out, returning with knives and forks.*] Will a dollar buy the books, mother?

**Sadie.** Mrs Black paid me a dollar, to-day.

**Mamie.** But if you spend both for books, what will we have for food?

**Sadie.** I did a washing for Mrs. Campbell, to-day.

**Mamie.** Poor mother! [*Goes up and puts*



*both arms about Sadie.*] It is a shame for you to have to work so hard. Let me stay out of school and help you. I'm a big girl, now

**Sadie.** [*Stroking Mamie's hair.*] A big girl, and a good one. If you can ever get enough education to teach, think how much you will be able to help me! It is worth striving for, Mamie.

[*Enter Father, reeling. He sees them standing with their arms around each other, and raises his fist as if to strike them. They shrink away from him, and escape the blow.*]

**Father.** Supper ready—hic—yet?

**Mother.** Almost ready.

**Father.** [*Angrily.*] Almost? Why isn't it ready,—hic—now?

**Sadie.** [*Aside to Mamie, as she goes back to her work.*] Oh, Mamie! He told me, only this morning, that he wouldn't do it again.

**Father.** [*Angrily.*] Wha's that? Dont-cher dare talk 'bout me, unless you want to feel the weight of my fist. [*Falls into the rocking chair, and immediately goes to sleep, snoring loudly.*]

**Sadie.** Hurry, Mamie, and get the table set. The biscuits are ready to bake, now. [*Carries pan of biscuits to the other room.*]

**Mamie.** [*To audience, fiercely.*] If I were a man, I'd put everyone who sells whiskey in jail for ten—yes, for twenty, years! [*Goes out of the room in an angry manner.*]

**George.** [*Running into the room and shout-*

ing.] I got it, mother. Here's the dollar.  
[*Runs to the chair, discovers his father, and backs away.*]

**Father.** [*Rousing up.*] Whatcher say? Got dollar? Give it to me! Give it to me, I say!

**George.** [*Putting his hands behind him.*] It belongs to mother.

**Father.** [*Getting up.*] Wha's her's 'smine. Give it here!

**George.** [*Edging toward door.*] I'll ask mother.

**Father.** You will, hey? [*Jumps at George, they struggle a moment, and fall, together. Father gets the money, holds it up before the audience, laughs defiantly, and then staggers out the door.*]

**Mamie.** [*Coming in, sees George, runs to him, screams, and tries to lift him up.*] Mother! Oh, mother! Come here!

**Sadie.** [*Running in.*] What is it? Georgie! Georgie, my son! [*Falls on her knees beside him.*]

**George.** [*Raising himself on his elbow.*] Don't worry, mother! I'm not much hurt. [*Groans, and rubs shoulder.*] But the money—[*Groans and rubs head.*]

**Mother.** [*Supporting him.*] What has happened?

**George.** He knocked me down and took the dollar. [*Hides his face on the floor.*]

**Mamie.** He did? [*Stamps her feet, and goes through the motion of pitching someone out of the door.*]

**George.** I tried as hard as I could to keep it away from him.

**Sadie.** Of course you did! Don't worry about it. Come, let me help you up. [*Mamie and Sadie help him to his feet and lead him to the rocking chair.*]

**Mamie.** But, mother! Our books!

**Sadie.** [*Sadly.*] We shall have to wait, dear, until I can get paid for another washing. Are you comfortable, George? [*Puts cushion behind him.*]

**George.** Mother, he robs us of everything!

**Sadie.** It is the whiskey that does it, my son. Your father was a good man, once. [*Leans on the back of the rocking chair, hiding her face in her arms, which are folded across it.*]

**Mamie.** Are you ready for supper, mother? [*Puts chairs around the table.*]

**Sadie.** [*Pressing both hands to her eyes*] I don't feel like eating, just now. Eat without me, children. I am going up stairs a minute. [*Goes out, slowly.*]

**Mamie.** She is going away to cry where we won't see her. It makes me mad! [*Stamps her foot.*]

**George.** [*Starting up, angrily.*] I'd like to shoot every saloon keeper, and every man who helps make whiskey.

**Mamie.** George, shall you drink when you are a man?

**George.** [*Indignantly*] Mamie Clark, how dare you ask me such a question? You know I won't.

**Mamie.** [*Running to him, and patting his*

*arm.*] Of course I know you won't. I was just teasing you. Now, I'm going to find mother and see if I can't comfort her. [*Goes out of the door, singing, "Rescue the Perishing."*]

**George.** [*Sinking back in chair.*] I'd rather die than be a drunkard. [*Sits, quietly, for a moment, as if in deep thought, then rises slowly, and faces the audience.*] Ladies and gentlemen, we should have liked to play that the father reformed, and got work, and took care of his family; but, as a rule, it doesn't end that way in real life, and we wanted to show it just as it is.

[*Bows, and goes out.*]



# THE RIGMAREE.

---

## CAST OF CHARACTERS.

MRS. ELLA GATES.

MRS. MYRA WILLIS.

MRS. KATE WATSON.

RIGMAREE, made by two boys or girls.

---

This play may be acted in any room. If there are no boys to take part in the play, two girls can personate the Rigmaree. This character should be made as horrible as is possible with the materials the children have at hand. The girls personating the women should put up their hair and wear long dresses. Dolls, a basket of clean clothes, a knife and a whetstone, and a dog and cat will be needed in the play, besides a knotted stick for the Rigmaree's wand.

Plays ten minutes.

---

[*Enter Mrs. Ella Gates carrying a basket of clean clothes which she deposits on the floor beside the table. While she talks, she sprinkles and rolls the different pieces as if getting them ready to iron.*]

**Ella.** I don't know why it is, but I feel as if something dreadful were going to happen. Perhaps it's a cyclone. Oh! I am so afraid of cyclones! And blizzards. Maybe it's a blizzard. Oh, well, I have my washing done, whatever happens. And it's safely in the house, and it does look just be-a-u-tiful, if I do say so as shouldn't. [*Shakes out a pillow-case and looks at it admiringly, then holds it up before the audience.*] Did you ever see a whiter pillow-case? There isn't a woman in the neighborhood who can beat me washing. [*Mrs. Myra Willis comes rushing in, carrying a large doll under one arm and a cat under the other.*]

**Myra.** Oh, Mrs. Gates! I'm frightened almost to death. [*Throws herself into a chair and begins to rock violently, still holding the cat and doll.*]

**Ella.** [*Running toward her.*] My dear Mrs. Willis! What can be the matter? [*Puts one hand on Myra's shoulder.*]

**Myra.** Matter! Matter enough! Is it possible you haven't heard? [*Myra jumps up and begins to walk the floor, excitedly.* **Ella** follows her, trying to keep up while she talks.

**Ella.** I have heard nothing. What is it?

**Myra.** Oh, it is dreadful!

**Ella.** [*Wringing her hands.*] I knew something dreadful was going to happen. I felt it in my bones.

**Myra.** You'll be lucky if you escape with your bones. Oh, what shall we do? I hear it! I hear it! Oh! [*Screams, and rushes to the corner of the room furthest from the door.* **Enter Kate**

**Watson**, *carrying a doll and dragging a dog.*  
Oh, Mrs. Watson, it is only you! I am so relieved. I thought it was—

**Kate.** Isn't it dreadful? Lie down, Bruno! Lie down, I say! You ought to be thankful enough to mind, at once, now that I have saved your life.

**Ella.** [*Advancing toward Kate.*] I am glad to see you, Mrs. Watson. Please be seated. How is your baby?

**Kate.** Oh, don't ask me! I don't know. I had just life enough to get her over here. [*Places her doll in a chair.*]

**Ella.** But why? why? why?

**Kate.** I couldn't have stayed alone another minute!

**Myra.** Nor I. I felt as if I should die. [*Places her doll beside Myra's, then lifts the cat into the same chair.*] We'll have our families safe, whatever happens.

**Kate.** Provided we are safe, ourselves.

**Ella.** But what is it all about?

**Kate.** Is it possible she hasn't heard?

**Myra.** It looks that way. You tell her.

**Kate.** No, you. I don't dare speak it's name.

**Ella.** Ladies, this isn't fair! You must either tell me what you are talking about, or leave my house. I won't stand it another moment!

**Myra and Kate.** [*Standing directly in front of Ella, and whispering loudly.*] The Rigmaree is in town!

**Ella.** [*Aloud.*] The Rigmaree? What is that?

**Myra.** Hush! Don't speak his name aloud!  
[*Runs to look out of the window.*]

**Kate.** If he hears it, he will come, instantly.  
[*Runs to look out of the door.*]

**Ella.** What is he like? Do you see him?  
[*Runs to the window, then to the door.*] I'd like to see him.

**Myra.** [*Running to Ella, puts her hand over her mouth.*] Hush! You mustn't say that. Why, they say he reads one's very thoughts!

**Kate.** You won't want to see him more than once, let me tell you that.

**Myra.** [*Whispering.*] He can make you do anything.

**Kate.** [*Whispering.*] He could—he could make you eat up your washing.

**Ella.** [*Aloud.*] Nonsense. I don't believe a word of it. You are 'fraid-cats 'fraid cats! You are afraid of your shadow. [*Runs to the window again, puts both hands to her mouth and calls.*] Rigmaree! Oh, Rigmaree! Come here, I want you!

[**Kate and Myra** scream, and, picking up their dolls and pets, start for the door. It is opened, abruptly, and the **Rigmaree** enters. The **Rigmaree** consists of two boys under a fur robe. If there is no fur robe, use a grey blanket. One boy walks bent forward with one hand resting on his knee. In the other he carries a wand. The other boy is behind him, his arms around the first boy's waist,



*with his head resting on his back. When they walk, they resemble an animal having four legs. The foremost boy should wear a fantastic head of pasteboard, made to look unlike anything ever yet seen. The children should use their ingenuity in dressing this character, and should try to see how hideous they can make it. The **Rigmaree** comes straight toward **Ella**, and when it speaks, its voice is very deep and dreadful.]*

**Rigmaree.** I am the mighty Rigmaree. I hear you wish to speak to me.

**Ella.** [*Motioning him away.*] Oh, please go away.

**Rigmaree.** My dear, you wanted me to come. I heard it through my right-hand thumb.

**Ella.** I want you to go, now! I've seen enough of you. You frighten me. [**Myra and Kate** *steal toward the door.*] Oh, Mrs. Watson, Mrs. Willis, don't leave me!

**Rigmaree.** [*Turning toward Kate and Myra.*] Don't go ladies; stay awhile, do! You see, my friends, I know you, too. [**Kate and Myra** *creep back to the easy chair and sink into it close together, gathering their pets around them.*]

**Rigmaree.** [*Waving wand over Ella's head.*] Now, Mrs. Gates, I will that you shall do whate'er I tell you to. My willing slave you now must be, because you dared to call for me. [*Turns and waves the wand over Kate and Myra.*] And you two silly geese shall pay for



all your cowardice this day. Attention, now to what I say; for you must die or else obey. [*Turns to Ella while pointing his wand toward the clothes basket.*] Assume a graceful little jog. and put those cloths upon the dog.

**Ella.** Oh, Master! But all those clothes are clean. And no one in this neighborhood can wash—[*The Rigmaree points steadily at the basket, and Ella finally goes toward it in a funny jog trot. While she is wrapping the clothes around the dog, she weeps silently. The Rigmaree leaves her at work, and turns to Myra, pointing the wand at her.*]

**Rigmaree.** Now, Madam Willis, if you please, I'd like to see you make a cheese. [*Myra gets up and whirls around then sinks down as children do in making a cheese.*] 'Tis very good. And now, my dear, go get your cat; cut off its ear—[*Myra falls on her knees before him.*] Nay, do not fall upon your knees. You must have meat to eat with cheese. [*Points his wand at the cat, while looking fixedly at Myra. She gets up slowly and goes toward her cat, which she takes in her arm and kisses. The Rigmaree points his wand towards the table, and she goes there and picks up a knife and whetstone. While she sharpens the knife on the whetstone, the Rigmaree turns his attention to Kate.*]

**Rigmaree.** Now, Mrs. Watson, we will see how well you'll dance a jig for me. [*Kate dances before him.*] It was not well. You shook with fear, and on your cheek I saw a tear. I'm wild with rage, and now I'll try to

to draw a tear from t'other eye! Go, get your babe! Go, madam go! Cut off for me, its little toe. I'm going to wear it as a charm, bouud close beneath my good right arm. [*Points toward the doll with his wand and stares at Kate, she takes a step towards the doll, then halts as if undecided. Suddenly she turns, and makes a jump for the Rigmaree.*]

**Kate.** Monster! I'll die before I'll mutilate my child. [*Ella and Myra rush to Kate's assistance.*]

**Ella and Myra.** Monster! Let's kill him. Help! Help! [*Ella, Myra, and Kate fight with the Rigmaree; who roars dreadfully during the process, and finally push him toward the door, and out of the room. Then they turn and face the audience, bowing.*]

**Kate.** It isn't safe for anyone to come between a mother and her child.

**Ella and Myra.** [*To audience.*] You have seen that it is not safe.

[*They all go out together.*]



# THE MYSTERIOUS GUEST.

---

## CAST OF CHARACTERS.

MRS. EDNA POST.—A widow.

NELLIE POST. } —Mrs. Post's children.  
MAMIE POST. }

OLD WOMAN.—The Mysterious Guest.

---

All must dress themselves to look very poor. Considerable tin money will be required. If the money that is made for children's amusement cannot be obtained, a tinsmith will cut some round pieces of tin, for a small sum, if he charges anything at all. A paper bag containing a little cornmeal, a basin, stirring spoon, jug, valise, two darning needles, stockings, and a broom and dustpan will also be needed.

Plays fifteen minutes.

---

[*Enter Mrs. Edna Post, who is dressed to represent a middle-aged woman, hard-working and very poor. She unties her bonnet and places it on a chair, laying her shawl beside it.*]

**Edna.** I'm sure I don't know what is to become of us. Oh, it is so hard to be poor!

What shall I do? Oh, what shall I do?  
[*Wringing hands.*] Must I see my children starve?

**Nellie.** [*Rushing into room.*] Did you buy the bread, mother? Where did you put it?  
[*Looks under shawl.*]

**Edna.** [*Taking a broom from corner of room, begins sweeping.*] There is no bread, my daughter.

**Nellie.** No bread! But, mother, I'm very hungry.

**Edna.** I know you are, dear. I'm so sorry.  
[*Puts her arm around Nellie.*]

**Nellie.** Didn't Mrs. Graham pay you?

**Edna.** No. She said it would not be convenient before next week. It does seem, sometimes, as if rich people thought of nothing except their own convenience.

**Nellie.** [*Breaking away from Edna, begins to pace floor rapidly.*] When I'm the lady president of the United States—

**Mamie.** [*Hurrying into the room.*] You won't be, Nell. You'll be dead before I get done being president.

**Edna.** Oh, Mamie!

**Mamie.** I'm hungry, mother. Where did you put the bread? [*Looks under the shawl.*]

**Edna.** I didn't bring any, dear.

**Nellie.** That horrid old Mrs. Graham didn't pay her. [*Folds shawl and puts it away.*]

**Mamie.** But mother! What are we going to eat?

**Edna.** I'll make some cornmeal mush, pretty



soon. [*Takes up the dirt and puts the broom away.*]

**Mamie.** [*Running to look into a paper bag on the table.*] The cornmeal is almost gone, mother.

**Nellie.** [*Lifting a jug placed under the table.*] So is the molasses.

**Edna.** I guess there will be enough of both for supper. [*Looks in bag and lifts jug.*]

**Mamie.** But what about breakfast?

**Edna.** The Lord will provide, dear. We haven't starved, yet.

**Nellie.** No, but we've been hungry nearly all the time for ever and ever so long.

**Edna.** There are families who have less than we have. We must keep that thought in mind, and try to be thankful that we are no worse off. Bring me the basin, please, Mamie. [*Rolls up sleeves, while Mamie brings cooking utensils.*]

**Nellie.** I thought I heard someone knock. [*There is a sound of knocking on the door.*] I did hear someone. Who can it be? [*Goes to door, which she opens, revealing an Old Woman.*]

**Old Woman.** I'm cold and hungry. Won't you please help an old woman who is all alone in the world?

**Nellie.** Oh, do come in where it is warm! You are shivering, dreadfully. [*Gives her hand to the stranger to help her over the threshold.*] My! My! How cold your hands are!

**Edna.** [*Coming to meet Old Woman.*] My dear woman, it is little we can do for you, but

you are very welcome to a share of our nice fire.  
[*Helps Nellie lead the Old Woman to the stove. Mamie comes forward and begins to chafe one of her hands.*]

**Old Woman.** [*Looking up pitifully.*] I'm starving. I've had nothing to eat for two days.

**Edna.** Oh, I am so sorry! [*Aside.*] What shall I do? Have I a right to take food from my children, when they must soon be starving, too?

**Nellie.** [*Stepping to her mother's side.*] I'm not very hungry, mother.

**Mamie.** [*Coming to the other side.*] Let's divide. We'll go to sleep, pretty soon, and forget all about being hungry.

**Edna.** What sweet, unselfish girls I have! [*To guest.*] It isn't much that we can offer you—only a little cornmeal mush and molasses but you are very welcome to share it with us.

**Old Woman.** Are you, too, very poor?

**Edna.** We are poor; but I fear there are many whose sufferings are greater. We have each other, and that is one blessing that we sometimes forget.

**Nellie.** [*Patting Old Woman's hand.*] I think we owe you something for coming to see us, to-day. We almost had the blues.

**Edna.** Are you comfortable? If so, I'll go and make the mush.

**Old Woman.** I'm nice and warm, now. If you please, I'd like to stir the mush. I have a very nice way of making it.

**Edna.** You! Indeed, I couldn't think of allowing you to do it.

**Old Woman.** I have a stick, here, [*Drawing stick from under cloak.*] that gives mush a very fine flavor. Pour the meal into the basin, and let me show you. Please let me.

**Edna.** Well, if it will please you.

[*The Old Woman goes to the table with Edna.*

*Mamie and Nellie take seats close together at one end of the room, and begin to darn stockings. Edna pours the meal into the basin, then goes to fix the fire, while the Old Woman stirs the meal.*]

**Old Woman.** [*Covering up the basin.*] It is stirred enough, now. It must stand covered up, like this, for at least twenty minutes before water is added. ]*Hobbles over to the girls and looks at their work.*]

**Edna.** It shall be as you say. I need a little rest, anyhow. [*Sits herself in the rocking chair.*]

**Old Woman.** [*Taking Mamie's stocking.*] It seems to me you are puckering your work, just a little. [*Puts in her stick, and turns it around.*] On the whole, however, I think you do well, [*To Nellie.*] Do you darn stockings as well? Let me see. [*Takes the stocking, puts her stick in it, and turns it around. She does not return Mamie's stocking when she returns Nellie's, but holds it under her arm.*] You do your work a little better, but then, I think you are a little older. [*Both girls nod vigorously.*] I like girls who work.

**Mamie.** We don't like to work, but we do like to help mother.

**Nellie.** [*Laughing.*] I'm afraid we wouldn't do much darning, if it wasn't for helping mother.

**Old Woman.** [*Hobbling to door.*] By the way, there is something just outside the door that I must get.

**Nellie.** [*Jumping up.*] Let me get it for you.

**Mamie.** [*Jumping up.*] Can't I.

**Edna.** [*Jumping up.*] Don't go out into the cold.

**Old Woman.** [*Turning her head, motions them back with one hand.*] Just a minute! [*Drops the stockings beside the door, and goes out, closing the door behind her.*]

**Edna.** [*Hurries to the door, and opens it.*] My dear woman! It is too cold—why, where is she?

**Nellie.** [*Running to door.*] Perhaps she went around the corner. [*Goes out, followed closely by Mamie.* **Edna** stands holding the door slightly ajar, so as to look out.]

**Edna.** Don't you see anything of her?

**Mamie.** [*Coming in followed by Nellie.*] Not a thing.

**Nellie.** We looked carefully.

**Mamie.** We went further than so old a person could possibly go in so short a time.

**Edna.** It is the strangest thing I ever heard of.

**Mamie.** It is just as if the ground had opened and swallowed her.

**Edna.** [*Closing the door, and walking*



*slowly toward table.] There might have been a carriage—*

**Nellie.** That poor, old thing in a carriage!

**Edna.** But she must have gone off in some such way. You don't suppose she could fly, do you?

*[While they talk, the girls warm their hands by the fire. Edna takes the cover from the corn-meal, which she begins to stir, then stops, surprised, and lifts the dish closer to her face.]*

**Edna.** Why—why—What does it mean?

**Mamie.** *[Running to her.]* What is it, mother?

**Edna.** Am I dreaming? *[Rubs her eyes.]* See here! *[Holds up a silver dollar.]*

**Nellie.** *[Who has found her stocking.]* Mercy on me! How—What—Oh, mother!! Mother!

**Edna.** *[Looking up.]* What is it?

**Nellie.** Just see here! *[Holds up silver dollar.]*

**Mamie.** Stir the meal again, mother. *[Jumps up and down, excitedly.]* Hurry, and stir it again! *[Catches sight of Nellie, who has seated herself on the floor, and is busy taking silver dollars from her stocking.]* My goodness me! Where is my stocking? *[Rushes wildly around the room in search of it, then seats herself on floor opposite Nellie, and begins to pull money from her stocking.]* **Edna** comes to rocking chair and seats herself with basin in her lap. She stirs vigorously, then



*takes out a piece of money, and stirs again. For a few minutes all are too busy to speak.]*

**Edna.** There! I guess I've taken out the last penny.

**Nellie.** [*Holding up stocking.*] It is empty.

**Mamie.** [*Holding up stocking.*] Mine, too.

**Nellie.** Mother, what ever shall we do with it all? Is it ours to keep?

**Edna.** I suppose so.

**Mamie.** I wish that poor, old woman would come back so we could divide with her.

**Nellie.** Why, you little goose, it was she who gave it to us.

**Edna.** I don't understand it at all.

**Nellie.** I do. She's a fairy. [*Gets up, holding her dress to keep the money from falling on the floor. Goes to her mother and pours the money in her lap. Mamie follows her example, and then the two sisters throw their arms around each other, and begin to dance around the room.*]

**Girls.** [*Singing as they dance.*] We've seen a fairy! We've seen a fairy.

**Edna.** Where shall we keep it? Oh, I know! [*Goes to table, takes a satchel from under it, then turns her back to the audience, while pouring the money into satchel. The girls continue dancing.*] Come, girls. How crazy you act!

**Nellie.** Come, where?

**Edna.** We'll go to a restaurant and have a good square meal, before we decide how to

spend our money. [*Starts toward the door, carrying the satchel.*]

**Mamie.** [*As she and Nellie dance toward the door.*] And mother! let's each take some poor, hungry child to eat with us.

**Edna.** Of course we will, if we chance to see one. [*Holds the door open for the girls to dance out, then follows, just turning to bow to the audience as she makes her last remark.*] Can you imagine why that woman gave her money to us?



# THREE NEWSBOYS.

Adapted from "The Little Millers."

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS.

MAX.

TOM.

JOHNNY

---

This play is written for three boys, one somewhat smaller than the others. They should be dressed poorly. All should carry papers, and Max should have a bootblack's outfit, besides.

The boys will have to learn how to make a great show of fighting, without hurting one another, and how to fall without hurting themselves.

Plays ten minutes.

---

[*Enter Max with bootblack's box strapped across his shoulder, and a newspaper in his hand. He leans against the wall, and appears to be deeply interested in something he is reading. Tom and Johnny come in. Their heads are close together, and they seem to be*

*whispering quite confidentially. They do not see Max.]*

**Tom.** [*Aloud.*] I tell you, Johnny, I know how we can make big money.

**Johnny.** How? Does anyone else know about it?

**Tom.** Not many. I'll let you into the secret, though, if you will promise never to tell

**Johnny.** Course I won't tell. What should I want to give it away for?

[*The two boys stop in centre of room, and begin to whisper.*]

**Max.** [*Aside.*] They've no right to have a corner on jobs when there are folks who are starving. I'll find out what it is. [*Goes toward the two boys. They see him coming, and start to run, but he catches them.*]

**Max.** [*Catching Johnny by the shoulder.*] Helloa, fellows! Niceday isn't it? [*Tom starts to run, and Max lets go of Johnny and catches him.*] Hold on! [*Shouts in Tom's ear.*] Fine day, isn't it?

**Tom.** [*Crossly.*] There's no call for you to split a fellow's head open.

**Max.** [*Pleasantly.*] I've got to speak so folks can hear.

**Tom.** Well, what do you want.

**Max.** Want to know how much you'll take for your secret.

**Tom.** I have no secret.

**Max.** What'll you take for what you know? I'm in earnest. [*Tom tries to edge away, but*



**Max** dances around so as to always keep in front of him. **Johnny** stands at one side, watching them, his hands thrust into his pockets.]

**Tom.** [*Contemptuously.*] It will take more than you own to pay for what I know.

**Max.** [*Laughing.*] Oh, get out! Why, you don't know me. I am the Governor's only son. [*Holds his head up very high while making this announcement, and Tom nearly, but not quite, breaks away from him.*]

**Tom.** Shucks. You can't fool me. I saw you blacking a fellow's boots, just now.

**Johnny.** I saw him, too. He overheard what you said, Tom, and he's dying to know the rest.

**Max.** [*To Johnny.*] You're a good guesser. [*To Tom.*] Well, out with it. I mean to know.

**Tom.** [*Sneering.*] You do, eh? Let's see you find out.

**Max.** I have a family to support, and when there are hungry folks to be fed, no one has a right to corner a job. You've got to tell me what you know.

**Tom.** We won't do it. We'll let you know you can't boss us.

**Max.** [*Rolling up his sleeves.*] I can lick you until you'll be glad to tell.

**Tom.** [*Sneering.*] Both of us together? Come on, Johnny.

[*The boys pretend to fight, and Max finally piles both Tom and Johnny on the ground, then places one foot on Tom to hold him down.*]

**Max.** Got enough?

**Tom.** Yes; let me up.

**Johnny.** Oh, dear! My arm hurts! Oh, dear me!

**Max.** Will you tell?

**Tom.** Yes.

**Max.** Honor bright?

**Tom.** Honor bright.

**Max.** Hope to die if you don't?

**Tom.** Hope to die if I don't.

**Max.** All right. I trust to your honor. [*Bends over Johnny, who is still crying, and lifts him to his feet, then wipes his tears away.*] I hurt you more than I meant to, and I'm downright ashamed of myself. [*Brushes Johnny's clothes, then puts his hands in his pocket and takes out a new penny, which he hands to him.*] Here, take this. It is the first time I ever licked a chap who was smaller than I am.

**Tom.** [*Who had got on his feet, and was watching Max.*] Well you are a queer one!

**Johnny.** I like you in spite of the licking. [*Puts the penny in his pocket.*]

**Max.** A big boy who licks a little boy isn't fit to be liked. He is only fit to be kicked.

**Tom.** All right; I'll kick you!

**Max.** No you won't. That is a little job that I always do for myself. [*Walks around kicking himself vigorously.* **Tom and Johnny** laugh heartily.]

**Max.** Now to business. What's the secret? Where's the job?

**Tom.** You won't tell anyone else, will you?

**Max.** Not a tell.

**Tom.** Honor bright?

**Max.** Honor bright.

Tom. Hope to die if you do?

Max. Hope to die if I do.

Tom. Well, [*The boys draw closer together.*]  
I have got on the right side of a fellow who lets  
me sweep out the wheat cars when they are un-  
loaded.

Max. Yes? What of it?

Tom. We have all the wheat we sweep out.  
Don't you see?

Max. Can you sell it?

Tom. You bet we can.

Johnny. [*Jumping up and down excitedly.*]  
It's as easy as sliding down a greased pole.

Max. Who buys it?

Tom. A chicken-feed man.

Max. Who?

Tom. A man who sells chicken feed. I  
made seventy-five cents yesterday.

Max. [*Astonished.*] Get out!

Tom. I did, for a fact.

Johnny. [*Jumping.*] He hasn't told you  
all, yet. Hurry up, Tom!

Tom. [*Embarrassed.*] There is not much  
more; nothing, in fact, worth telling.

Max. [*Catching Tom by the collar.*] See  
here, fellow, you agreed to tell it all.

Tom. [*Squirming.*] Let go. You'll know  
the rest when you get there.

Max. I want to know it now.

Tom. Well, it's only this: There are chances  
to get a peck or two a day out of some of the  
full cars.

Johnny. And it's all right to do so! Tom  
said so!

**Tom.** You see it is owned mostly by rich folks who have stolen it from poor folks. We are only taking what really belongs to us, and rich folks never know the difference.

**Max.** [*Scornfully.*] You low, miserable thief! I hate myself for talking to you a minute! I despise myself even for licking such a chap! [*Turns to walk away.*]

**Johnny.** [*Running after Max, catches him by the hand.*] Wait a minute. I want to ask you something. Is it stealing?

**Max.** Course it is. The wheat doesn't belong to him, or to you, or to me, does it?

**Johnny.** But Tom said—

**Max.** I guess he has said a good many things that are not true. Does he let folks see him take the wheat?

**Johnny.** No.

**Max.** Wouldn't he if it belonged to him?

**Johnny.** I—I guess so. If you please, I'd rather go with you.

**Max.** Well, come on. We may have to work hard, but we'll be honest. [*They go out.*]

**Tom.** [*Who has been standing with bent head and digging his toes into the ground as if ashamed, now raises his head and looks defiant.*] It is easy enough to talk; but such fellows never get rich, and I mean to be rich some day. I'll have money, I don't care how I get it. [*Goes out.*]

[*Enter Max, with a bundle of papers under his arm.*]

**Max.** Pa-pe-r-r-rs! All about the suicide.

New gold mine discovered. Evening Journal, only two cents! Paper, sir? Paper, ma'am? [*Offering papers to audience.*] Pa-pe-r-r-rs! Shine em up! Only five cents! Shine, sir? [*To gentleman in audience.*]

[*Enter Johnny, running. He runs against Max, and is brought up suddenly.*]

**Johnny.** Land o' goshen!

**Max.** [*Laughing.*] Want to kill a fellow?

**Johnny.** I didn't see you. I must hurry.

**Max.** What's the rush?

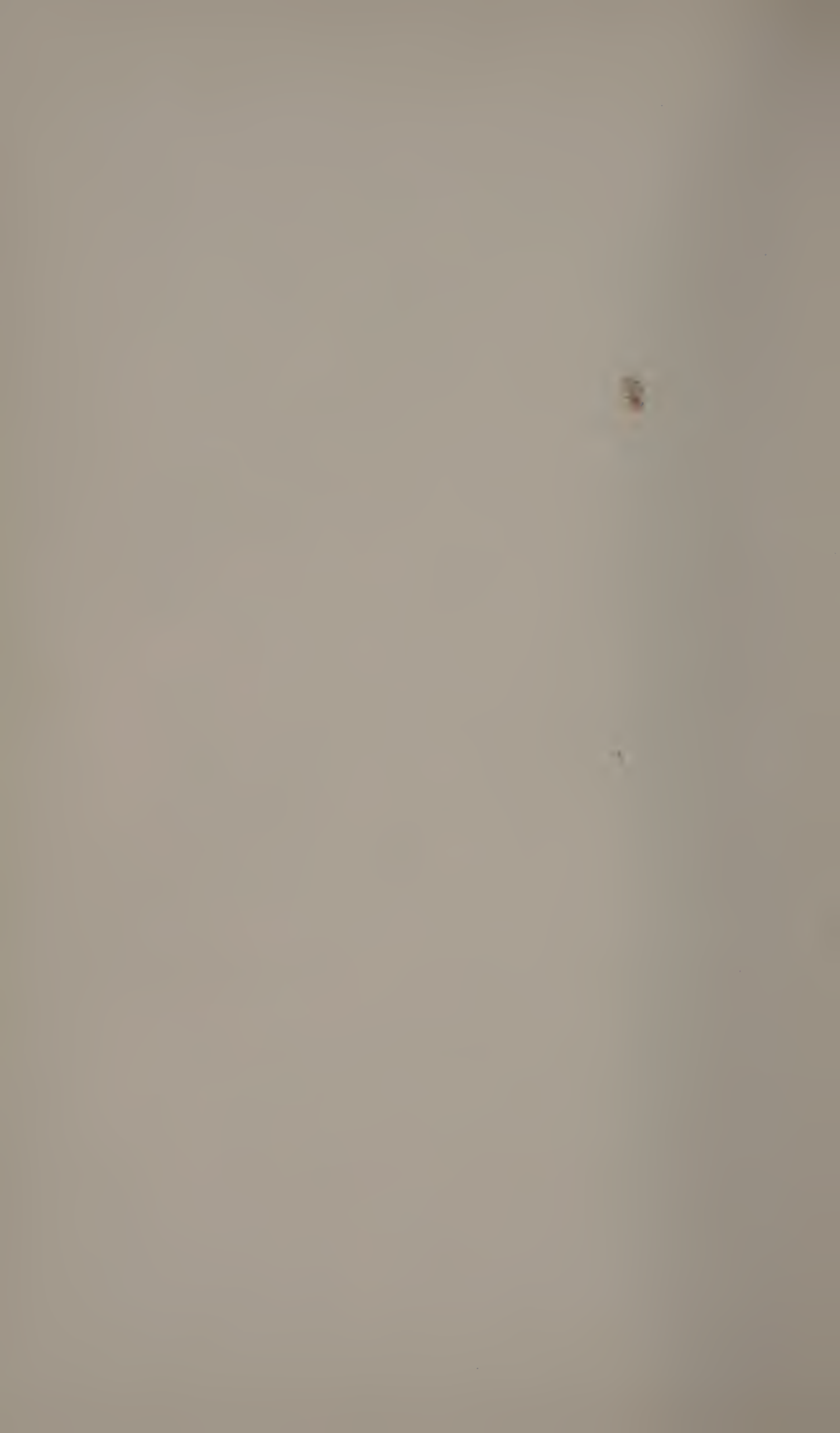
**Johnny.** Going for the doctor. Tom fell out of a wheat car, and I guess he's killed.

**Max.** Was he stealin' wheat?

**Johnny.** Yes; isn't it too bad? [*Runs around the room, then out the door.*]

**Max.** [*To audience.*] This seems to be one more case where honesty is the best policy. Well, I'll go and see if I can do anything for Tom. The poor chap never had a home, and I suppose I ought not to blame him. [*Leaves the room, calling his papers as he goes.*]





# THE STOLEN CAT.

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS.

EDITH.  
ALMA.  
CARL.

WILL.  
JOE.  
HARRY.

---

This little play may be acted on a stage, but was written for a family sitting-room, having one door leading into a hall, and one leading into the dining-room, and where nothing in the way of stage accessories could be provided.

Plays ten minutes.

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[*Enter Carl and Will, from hall. They have masks over their faces and come in stealthily.*]

**Carl.** This is the place.

**Will.** Where is the cat? [*Voices are heard outside of the door.*]

**Carl.** Some one is coming. We must hide.  
[*Carl crawls under the couch. Will hides behind an easy chair that is drawn into a corner.*]

**Will.** [*In loud whisper.*] Are you all right, Carl?

**Carl.** Yes, do keep still.

[*Enter Edith and Alma from dining-room*  
**Edith** carries a cat and appears to be in her own home. **Alma** has her wraps on, for she has come calling.]

**Edith.** She is the very nicest cat I ever had. Indeed, she ought to be, for she cost a hundred dollars.

**Alma.** A hundred dollars! Is she worth it? [*The girls seat themselves so as to face each other. Edith strokes the cat while she talks.*]

**Edith.** Yes, and more. We bought her when she was only a kitten. She is the daughter of a famous old cat that once saved a city from burning up, and a mouse simply can't live in her presence. They die of fright.

**Alma.** But would she bring a hundred dollars? That's the question.

**Edith.** Bring it? Of course she would. Anyone who understands cats would give it and be glad to.

**Alma.** What a responsibility it must be to take care of so precious an animal! Well, I must be going. The children will soon be coming from school.

**Edith.** Oh, don't be in a hurry! You come so seldom.

**Alma.** [*Rising.*] I pay everyone of your visits, my dear! Now, when am I to be indebted to you for another?

**Edith.** [*Rising.*] Oh, I don't know. I'll

come as soon as ever I can; but Mistress Muff, here, [*Raising the cat to her face.*] does take so much of my time. You see, we are getting her ready for the great cat show that is to take place next month. We fully expect she will win the hundred dollar prize.

**Alma.** Indeed! I really hope you will get it. Well, good-bye. Come over as soon as you possibly can. [*Goes toward door.*]

**Edith.** I shall surely do so. But please don't wait for me. Come again. [*Alma goes out, kissing tips of her fingers to Edith.*]

**Edith.** Now, kitty, you must sleep in this rocking chair while I do the chamber work. I've been dreadfully slow about my work this morning. [*Arranges the cushions in a rocking chair, and lays the cat down, then covers her with a shawl, and remains bending over her until she is perfectly quiet.*] There! there! [*Sings a few lines of a cradle song, leaving the room very gradually as she sings, as if afraid of awaking the cat. She goes into the dining-room, and as she closes the door behind her, Carl and Will peer cautiously, from their hiding-places.*]

**Carl.** [*In a loud whisper.*] It's all right, Will, she's gone. [*Crawls from under the couch.*]

**Will.** But she left the cat. [*Comes from behind the chair, and both boys tiptoe to the rocking chair holding the cat.*]

**Carl.** She said it was worth a hundred dollars.

**Will.** And that it would bring a hundred-dollar prize at the show.

**Carl.** We can take her to the cat show.

**Will.** But somebody might recognize her.

**Carl.** We'll paint her a different color.

**Will.** [*Slapping his knee.*] Good idea! We'll each have a hundred dollars, after the show, for we'll sell her immediately.

**Carl.** Where's the bag?

**Will.** [*Producing a calico bag from his pocket.*] Here it is. Put her in. [*Carl lifts the cat into the bag, while Will holds it, then the boys tiptoe toward the door leading into the hall.*]

**Carl.** [*Stopping near door.*] Great Scott! I hear someone coming. Jump through the window, Will. [*The boys hurry to the window, which they try to raise, and fail. Edith is heard singing outside the door.*]

**Will.** What in time shall we do?

**Carl.** Get under the couch, quick! Take the cat with you. [*Will gets under the couch with the cat. Carl hides behind the chair.*]

**Edith.** [*Coming into the room.*] Come, kitty, it is time for your lunch. [*Goes to the rocking chair where she left the cat sleeping.*] Why, that naughty cat isn't here! Kitty, kitty, kitty! [*Cat mews, or Will mews for her.*] Where are you, kitty? [*Looks around the room. Cat mews again.*] Mercy on me, where can she be? She sounds as if she were being smothered. Kitty, kitty, kitty! Come kitty! Come, my pretty Muff! [*Cat mews again.*] She's under the couch! Why don't the silly thing come out? [*Looks under the couch, and rushes screaming to the other side of the room.*]



Oh, a man! A horrid man! [*Pushes chair away from corner, so as to get behind it, and sees Carl.*] Oh, another man! Murder! Thieves! Fire! fire! fire!

**Will.** [*Jumping up, puts his hand over her mouth.*] Hush! You'll have the whole neighborhood here!

**Carl.** [*Coming from hiding-place.*] Choke her! Choke her!

**Edith.** [*Trying to free herself and screaming in a muffled way.*] I want the whole neighborhood!

**Carl.** Madam, be calm. We'll explain.

**Will.** [*Laughing.*] What shall we say?

**Carl.** Madam, the cat has hydrophobia. We are cat doctors.

**Will.** [*Aside.*] Oh, the rascal! [*Laughs.*] Cat doctors, indeed! [*Laughs again.*]

**Edith.** Hydrophobia! Oh, my Muff will die! [*Sinks to the floor, and begins to cry.*]

**Carl.** [*Soothingly.*] No, she won't. I'll cure her. Let me take her to my office—

**Edith.** Can't you cure her here?

**Will.** [*Aside, with a wink to the audience.*] Well, hardly.

**Carl.** That would be impossible. You see I must take her where my instruments are.

**Edith.** [*In alarm.*] Instruments!

**Carl.** I shan't hurt her.

**Edith.** [*To Will.*] Take her out of that bag, you miserable villian!

**Will.** If I should, she would bite a hole in each one of us.

**Edith.** She was all right when I left the room only an hour ago.

**Carl.** Hydrophobia always comes on quickly. Let me help you up, madam. [*Offers his hand to Edith. She accepts it, and Carl helps her up, and leads her to an easy chair where he seats her very politely.*] I am sorry for you, madam; but if you'll only be patient a little while—

**Will.** [*Aside, as he pats the cat.*] Just until we get the two hundred dollars.

**Edith.** How can I be patient in the face of this dreadful trial? [*Sobs.*]

**Carl.** We'll bring your cat back as soon as we possibly—

**Alma.** [*Outside the door, is heard speaking very excitedly.*] This is the house! I saw them go in here. The wretches! [*Door opens and Alma walks in with Joe and Harry, who are dressed to represent policemen.*]

**Joe.** Villians! I arrest you! [*Brandishes club.*]

**Harry.** Wretches, so do I! [*Brandishes club.*]

**Alma.** [*Runs to Edith and throws her arms around her.*] Poor, dear girl!

[**Carl and Will** try to escape, but are caught by the policemen. **Will** drops cat, and **Alma** picks her up, while the scuffle goes on between the boys, takes her from the bag, and restores her to **Edith**, who kisses her. The policemen bring **Carl and Will** to front of

*stage, and the girls take places beside them,  
then all bow and say in chorous:]*

“You see what happens to those who steal  
cats.”



# WHAT AILED MAUDIE.

---

## CAST OF CHARACTERS.

MRS. HAZEL LINDLEY.

GROVER LINDLEY

MAUDIE LINDLEY.

DR. LLOYD.

TOM JONES.

---

One girl acts as mother, the other girl as daughter. One boy is the son, another is his friend, and a third is the doctor. If there are not enough boys, one boy can personate both Tom and the doctor, and, with a change in names, a girl can take Grover's part. If there were no boys at all, girls could act the entire play, by simply changing the names and having a woman doctor. If the one personating Tom can do anything better than acting like the chicken, it will be easy to make the change.

Plays fifteen minutes.

---

[*Enter Mrs. Hazel Lindley with a dust cloth. She begins to dust the furniture, and to put things to rights, talking to herself while she works.*]



**Hazel.** I don't see what ails Maudie of late. She seems dreadfully nervous. I believe she has cried at least five times a day during the past week, and no matter how much I question her, she simply won't tell what ails her. I don't believe she knows. If she goes on this way much longer I shall certainly have to send for a doctor.

[*Enter Maudie with her handkerchief pressed to her eyes. She throws herself into a rocking chair, and begins to sob and moan aloud. Her mother leaves her work and stands beside her, gently smoothing her hair.*]

**Hazel.** Maudie dear, do tell mamma what ails you. It hurts me to have you cry like this. [**Maudie sobs harder.**] Maudie, I can't allow you to go on like this. It will make you sick; besides, it is ridiculous. [*Speaks very firmly.*] Now, stop it at once! Stop it, I say! I don't want to speak to you again. [**Maudie continues crying.**] Maudie, do you hear me? If you do not stop crying, instantly, I shall send for the doctor and he will give you some nasty medicine. [*Shakes Maudie, who cries harder than ever. Hazel looks at her for a moment, quite thoughtfully, then goes to the door and calls.*] Grover! Oh, Grover! Grover Lindley, I want you!

**Grover.** [*Coming into the room with a jump.*] Yes'm. What do you want?

**Hazel.** You must go for Dr. Lloyd. Tell him to come at once.

**Grover.** What for?

**Hazel.** Don't stop to ask questions. Go at once. [*Hazel returns to her work, and Maudie sits with her handkerchief to her eyes. Presently, there is a knock at the door. Hazel opens it, and Dr. Lloyd comes in, wearing glasses and carrying a medicine case.*]

**Dr. Lloyd.** Good morning, madam!

**Hazel.** Oh, doctor, I'm so glad to see you! I'm afraid my daughter is very ill.

**Dr. Lloyd.** [*Going to Maudie.*] Is this the young lady? What seems to be the trouble?

**Hazel.** I can't find out. She cries, like this, a good share of the time.

[*Doctor goes to Maudie, and feels her pulse, looking at his watch as he does so. Hazel stands, with one hand on the back of Maudie's chair.*]

**Dr. L.** Doesn't she give herself any time to breathe?

**Hazel.** Oh, yes; but when she isn't crying, she looks as sad as if she had lost every friend she ever had. She won't speak or smile.

**Dr. L.** How long has this been going on?

**Hazel.** A little more than a week.

**Dr. L.** Look up, Miss Maudie. I want to see your tongue. [*He pulls Maudie's hands away from her face, although she struggles to keep them there.*] Mrs. Lindley, I shall have to trouble you to hold her hands. [*Hazel holds Maudie's hands, while the doctor examines her face through an opera glass. Then he takes a fork from his case of instruments, and proceeds to pry open her mouth with the handle.*]

**Maudie** suddenly opens her mouth and runs out her tongue at him.]

**Dr. L.** [Nodding.] I thought so! It was a brief glimpse, but quite sufficient. [Takes a long tube made of brown paper from his medicine case, and, resting one end against **Maudie's** chest, applies his ear to the other. **Maudie** jerks herself away from it.]

**Hazel.** Do you think it is her lungs, doctor?

**Dr. L.** In my opinion it is the entire outfit—lungs, heart, liver—everything. [Takes out a bottle of medicine which he hands to **Hazel**.] Give her a teaspoonful of this every hour. Keep her amused. Make her laugh, if you possibly can. If you see any change in her, send for me, at once. [Goes to door, turns and bows, as he leaves.] Good morning, madam.

**Hazel.** [Walking some distance from **Maudie**, faces audience, with her hands on her hips.] He said I was to keep her amused. [Looks at **Maudie**, who has commenced sobbing again.] He said I was to make her laugh. She looks as if she'd like to laugh, doesn't she? Oh, dear, dear, dear, this world is full of trouble! [Goes to door and calls.] Oh, Grover! Grover Lindley! I want you.

**Grover.** [Comes in with a jump, as before.] Yes'm. What you want?

**Hazel.** Grover, the doctor says we've got to make Maudie laugh.

**Grover.** Let's tickle her.

**Hazel.** That might make her have fits. No, that won't do. Can't you think of something else?

**Grover.** I'll get Tom Jones. [*Runs out of the house.* **Hazel** goes to **Maudie**, and, placing herself before her, begins to make up faces.]

**Hazel.** Look at my face, Maud. I want to sneeze, and I can't make it come. Doesn't it make my face look fanny? [*Wriggles her nose, and giggles.* **Maudie** looks at her, then bursts into a very loud fit of weeping]

**Hazel.** [*To audience.*] Now, what shall I do? I almost cracked my face to make her laugh, and it has made her worse. I can't do anything funnier than that.

**Grover.** [*Coming in with a jump.*] Here's Tom.

[**Tom** enters, comically dressed in clothes much too large for him.]

**Hazel.** How do you do, Mr. Jones? My son seems to think that you can help me. Has he told you what the doctor said?

**Tom.** [*Nodding his head vigorously.*] You bet he has.

[*Walks to the chair where Maudie sits with her eyes covered, and gives her a sounding kiss on the cheek.*]

**Maudie.** [*Jumping up, angrily, and uncovering her face.*] How dare you!

[**Tom** does not reply, but, pulling out his handkerchief, begins to sob as **Maudie** did. **Maudie** sinks back into the chair, and again covers her eyes with her handkerchief. **Tom**



*gives her another loud kiss, and again she jumps up angrily.]*

**Maudie.** How dare you, I say? Mother, why do you allow it? [*Starts to leave the room but Grover gets ahead of her and leans against the door. Tom dances wildly around her, sobbing all the while in a very loud key.*]

**Hazel.** [*Picking up some sewing and seating herself at one side of the room.*] He has succeeded in arousing her, anyhow. I think I'll just let them alone. [*Sews busily.*]

**Maudie.** [*Returning to chair.*] You are a dreadful wretch, and I hate you! I hate you, and hate you, and hate you! [*Starts to put her handkerchief to her eyes again, but Tom makes a loud kissing sound, and she hastily draws it away and looks at him as if afraid.*]

**Tom.** [*Drawing a chair so close in front of Maudie that their knees touch, and speaking very seriously.*] Quack, quack, quack.

**Maudie.** Go away. [*Puts handkerchief to eyes. Tom smacks his lips and she draws it away. Grover giggles and comes a step nearer.*]

**Tom.** [*Mournfully.*] B-a-h! B-a-a-h! B-aaa-h!

**Maudie.** Mother, can't you make this, this idiot leave the house?

**Hazel.** [*Working busily.*] I rather like him.

**Tom.** Mew! Meouw! Put-r-r, meouw, meouw, meouw!

[*Maudie starts to cry, without putting her*



*handkerchief to her eyes, but Tom smacks his lips two or three times, and she straightens her face, instantly.]*

**Grover.** [*Coming nearer.*] Hurrah! Give her some more, Tom!

**Tom.** Mew! Bow-wow! Quack! Gobble-gobble! [*Jumps up and begins scratching with his feet, like a chicken, then calls as hens do when they find a worm.*]

**Maadie.** I won't stand it! You treat me shamefully! You—you—oh, what a goose you are! [*Begins to laugh, a little at first, then so hard that she can't seem to stop.*]

**Hazel.** [*Watches her a moment, then jumps up, throwing down her work, and runs to Maudie's side.*] Maudie! Maudie! Can't you stop laughing? Oh, this is dreadful! [*To Tom, who is still scratching like a chicken.*] Go away, at once! You're killing her! Grover, do get the doctor, quick!

[*Hazel fans Maudie with her apron. Tom leaves the room with Grover. Maudie shakes with laughter, but only laughs aloud occasionally, and then with her hands to her side, as if she were very tired.*]

**Grover.** [*Coming in with a jump.*] Here is the doctor.

**Dr. L.** [*Hurrying to Maudie.*] It is as I thought. Madam, the medicine works perfectly. Your daughter is not ill, but is suffering from a guilty conscience.

**Hazel.** Oh, doctor, that isn't possible.

**Dr. L.** I cannot be mistaken in the symp-

toms. [*To Maudie.*] My child, you'd better tell the truth. You won't feel real well until you do. You see, we all know, now, what is the trouble with you.

**Maudie.** [*Ceases laughing, and begins to cry.*] Oh, I'm so ashamed! No one will ever like me again.

**Hazel.** Maudie, what did you do?

**Grover.** I know. I've known all the time. She—

**Hazel.** Hush, Grover, let Maudie tell.

**Maudie.** I—I—oh, I can't tell it.

**Dr. L.** Yes, you can. What did you do?

**Maudie.** I—I—killed grandma's cat.

**Grover.** She drowned it, 'cause it ate her pet squirrel.

**Hazel.** Killed grandma's cat! Maudie, how could you?

**Dr. L.** Madam, good morning! My patient will soon be well, now. A guilty conscience always causes much suffering. [*Bows and leaves the room.*]

**Hazel.** Maudie, we must go straight to grandma and ask her forgiveness. Grover, go tell papa that I shall send Maudie to the woodshed in about ten minutes.

**Grover.** [*To audience.*] That means she's going to get a licking. [*Runs out of the room.*]

**Hazel** follows, leading **Maudie**, who cries bitterly. When they have all left the room, **Grover** is heard calling outside the door.]

**Grover.** Pa! Oh, pa! Ma says get your strap and go into the woodshed! You've got to lick Maudie for killing grandma's cat!

# IN KLONDYKE.

---

## CAST OF CHARACTERS.

DICK.  
NED.  
HARRY.  
DAVE.

WILL.  
JACK.  
CHARLIE.  
NATHAN.

---

Eight boys are required for this play, and at least four of them must be able to commit a little speech, and declaim it effectively. No stage properties are required with the exception of a heavy rope. This play, when well acted, is exceedingly interesting, and may be used as a Friday afternoon exercise at school quite as well as in the home.

Plays fifteen minutes.

---

[*Enter Dick and Ned, talking earnestly. They walk slowly to the front of the stage, where they stand facing each other while they talk.*]

Dick. I think we shall have a lively meeting, to-night.

**Ned.** I guess all the boys expect to be present.

**Dick.** Shall you speak?

**Ned.** I don't expect to. I may, though, if I get excited.

**Dick.** There is no doubt but you'll get excited fast enough. This is new business to most of us, I fancy.

**Ned.** It is to me, I know. I wish I were well out of it.

*[Enter Harry and Dave, arm in arm.]*

**Harry.** I declare I wish it were over.

**Dave.** You don't wish it any more than I do.

**Harry.** *[To Dick and Ned.]* Helloa, boys!

**Dave.** You got here before us.

**Dick.** Yes, we're early birds.

**Harry.** I hope we're not the worms.

**Ned.** Poor Nathan is the worm, I guess.

*[All laugh a little, then suddenly grow serious.]*

**Harry.** That's tough, Ned.

**Ned.** I know it. I suppose I said it because I'm excited. I'm new to this business.

**Dick.** So are we all. But we mustn't show the white feather.

**Dave.** Nathan's bound to hang.

*[The four boys gather in a ring, and begin whispering together, as if greatly excited.]*

*Jack enters, unobserved, looks at them, curiously, then takes a seat at one end of the room. In a few moments Will and Charlie enter, dragging Nathan, whose hands are tied behind him, and whose feet are so fastened together*

*that he can only take very short steps. A handkerchief covers his mouth, and a rope is wound around his waist.]*

**Ned.** [*Looking around as the boys enter.*] There they come!

[*All look around, then hurry to get seats. They do not sit very near Jack. Will and Charlie lead their prisoner to a place where he faces the others, then remain standing on either side of him.*]

**Charlie.** Well, boys, what shall we do with him?

**Ned, Dave and Harry.** Hang him! Hang him! We must hang him!

**Dick.** Let the fellow speak. Let's hear what he has to say for himself.

**Will.** [*Removing the handkerchief from Nathan's mouth.*] Speak up. What have you to say for yourself?

**Nathan.** Gentlemen, I can say little that you will care to consider. I admit that I stole the bread—

**Ned, Dave and Harry.** Hear! Hear!

**Charlie.** He admits that he stole the bread.

**Nathan.** And I knew the penalty—

**Ned, Dave and Harry.** He knew the penalty.

**Dick.** Do you expect mercy?

**Nathan.** I do not. I thought it all out before I took the bread. I was starving,—starving! Do you know what that means?

**Ned.** We're likely to know before spring.

**Nathan.** But you don't know, yet. You can't even imagine. I thought I would be



brave, and starve without a murmur. I told myself that I would not be the first to suffer the punishment we voted to inflict upon anyone who stole food. I tried to live up to that resolution. Gentlemen, I tried as I have never before in all my life tried to do anything: but starvation made a coward of me. I was a strong man when I came to Klondyke,—strong and honorable. I am a weak man, now, and a thief. I saw the bread, and could not resist the temptation. I thought I must eat, even though I were to be hung the next moment. I have nothing more to say. [*Stands with bent head. There is silence in the room for a few moments, and all the boys sit with covered faces.*]

**Harry.** [*Rising to his feet.*] Gentlemen: This is a most unpleasant task. I would gladly be rid of it, but it is a case where duty and inclination do not walk together. When we came to Klondyke, we knew that starvation was one of the many dangers that confronted us, and we made laws by which we all agreed to be governed. That man, [*Pointing to Nathan.*] helped make the law which he was first to break. If any of our laws are to be kept, punishment must be inflicted in this first instance. I should say the same if he were my own brother. [*Sits down amid the applause of the others.*]

**Dick.** If the winter were nearly at an end, I should be in favor of overlooking this first offense; but it has just begun. Our food is already low. Unless help comes, more than one of us must die before spring. No man has any moral right to shorten the life of another by stealing

the food that is more precious than all the gold we have found. Each of us brought a certain amount of food with us. It is not the fault of those who brought the larger quantity that others brought less. [*Sits. The other boys whisper together.*]

**Ned.** [*Rising.*] Well, gentlemen, we are all of the same opinion, are we not?

**Will.** He must hang.

**Ned.** They who are in favor of hanging, will please say, Aye.

**All Together.** Aye. [*Will unwinds rope from Nathan's waist, and slips noose over his head.*]

**Ned.** Contrary, Nay!

**Jack.** [*Rising.*] Nay! [*There is great commotion, and Jack stands until the others quiet down. Will stands holding other end of rope.*] Gentlemen I should like to be heard a moment, if you please. You all know that the bread was stolen from me. Yet I have not authorized this meeting. Should I not at least have been consulted?

**Dave.** We waited two days for you to act.

**Ned.** There is a principle involved which we cannot ignore.

**Charlie.** It is a case of self-preservation.

**Jack.** But listen! I did not help to make that law. I came here, later, and so I cannot be bound by it, for I have never indorsed it. I would have scorned to make a law like that. It places us beneath the savages. Is it possible that we came from Christian homes—that we have lived in civilized communities? Gentle-

men, that law is all wrong. It must not be obeyed. Let us put our food together, and divide it equally. If we must die, let us die together, like men. I have a larger stock of provisions than any two of you, and you surely cannot accuse me of a mean motive in making this proposition. Whether you accept it or not, I want this one thing understood. That, man [*Pointing to Nathan.*] is my brother. [*Nathan looks up, surprised, and a murmur of surprise runs through Jack's audience.*] I adopt him as such, here, before you all, and I solemnly declare that what is mine, is my brother's also. He did not steal that bread! He took what belonged to him. [*Goes to Nathan, and throws one arm around his shoulder. Nathan hides his face on Jack's shoulder. There is perfect silence, for a moment, then the other boys begin to clap their hands, and stamp their feet, and whistle.*]

**Ned.** Three cheers for Jack Whitney! [*The boys cheer.*]

**Will.** Three cheers for Nathan Brown! [*The boys cheer. Jack unties the cords that bind Nathan, Will and Charlie helping him. The other boys crowd around them, and everybody shakes hands.*]

**Jack.** [*Waving his cap over his head.*] Attention! Attention! Boys, I have a ten-pound fruit cake that I have been saving for some special occasion!

**Ned.** This is the occasion.

**Jack.** So I think! Come on! I'll be minus a fruit cake in less than half an hour.

[*All go out, cheering for Jack.*]

# MARIAN'S WISH.

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## CAST OF CHARAGTERS.

MARIAN.  
HAZEL.

HARLAND.  
PLINY.

MARIE.

---

Frequently, the very little folks wish to take part in the plays given at home, but are not allowed to do so because they are too small to commit the lines to memory. This play is written especially for their benefit,—the characters, “Pliny” and “Marie” not being required to speak at all. The entire play has been planned for the younger members of the family, and may be played by quite small children.

Plays ten minutes.

---

[**Marian** comes in, carrying her doll, which she has wrapped up very carefully, and is singing to sleep. She may sing a verse of any little song she knows. When it is finished, she must lay the doll in its cradle. **Harland**

*runs in, at that moment, jumps over the cradle, then turns and pulls the doll out by its head.*

**Marian.** [*Stamping her feet.*] Oh, dear me! I never did see such a bad boy as you are getting to be.

**Harland.** [*Dancing up and down.*] You've made a rhyme! Marian! You've made a rhyme! Now you must wish before you speak, and the wish will surely come true.

**Marian.** [*After thinking for a moment, with one finger against her lips.*] I wish I could see a real live fairy.

**Harland.** Pshaw! Girls are so silly, Why didn't you wish for a million dollars? I would.

**Marian.** Why don't you?

**Harland.** Because I never make any rhymes. I don't know how. [*Suings the doll by its head.*]

**Marian.** Don't, Harland, you'll hurt her! [*Harland throws the doll into its cradle, and Marian picks it up and kisses it, then puts it back and covers it up, carefully.*]

**Harland.** Dolls are no fun. I'm going to have a dog.

**Marian.** [*Rocking her doll.*] Pooh! Dogs go mad.

**Harland.** [*Seating himself astride a chair, where he can watch Marian.*] I am going to have a wagon, too, and I'm going to have a dog big enough to draw me wherever I want to go.

**Marian.** [*Jumping up.*] Will you take me, Harland?



**Harland.** Maybe; if there are no boys to take. [*Takes a top from his pocket, gets down on the floor and begins to spin it. Marian comes up to watch him.*]

**Marian.** You told a wrong story Harland. You said my wish would come true.

**Harland.** It isn't time yet. Fairies don't come in a minute. I'll bet I can make this top spin longer than you can.

[*The door opens, and Hazel comes in, dressed to represent a fairy. Marian gets closer to Harland, and they take hold of hands and back away from Hazel as far as they can, as if afraid of her.*]

**Hazel.** Dear children. I have come to see what gift you'd like to have from me. One gift to each I'll now bestow; so choose at once, for I must go. [*Walks toward them, waving her wand. Harland comes forward a step or two and Marian keeps close behind him.*]

**Harland.** If you please, Miss Fairy, I want a little brother to play with.

[*Hazel turns and goes to the door, which she opens; then she leads in Pliny, who runs straight to Harland and takes his hand.*]

**Hazel.** Here is your brother. Love him well or what will happen, none can tell. 'Tis very bad to have a brother, and then desert him for another.

[*Hazel waves her wand over Harland's head, then points it toward the door, and Harland*

*and Pliny run out still holding hands. Marian starts to follow them, then hesitates, comes back to Hazel, and kneels before her.]*

**Marian.** If you please, dear Fairy, I want the nicest thing in the world to give to my mamma.

**Hazel.** [*Taking hold of Marian's hand, helps her to her feet.*] My child, your mother's life has taught her there's naught so nice as a good daughter. Be just as good as you can be, and she'll be happy, as you'll see.

**Marian.** But if one girl is nice, don't you think that two would be a great deal nicer? I think I'd like a little sister.

**Hazel.** It is well said. My dear you may take her another girl this day. [*Goes to the door and leads in Marie, who runs to Marian and kisses her.*]

**Hazel.** And now, dear children, if you'd know where fairies sleep, I'll let you go and see me put myself to bed in a lovely rose with petals red.

*[They all take hold of hands and dance out of the room.]*

# THE SICK DOLL.

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS.

MRS. MARJORIE GATES.

MRS. INEZ BROWN.

DR. OLIVE.

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This play was written for three quite small girls, and may easily be learned in an afternoon for performance before the family on the evening of the same day.

Plays ten minutes.

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[*Enter Mrs. Marjorie Gates, carrying the sick doll wrapped in blankets and lying on a pillow.*]

**Marjorie.** I'm afraid she is a very sick baby. I do wish some one would come in. [*Goes to cradle and lays the doll down very gently.*] Hush baby! Hush!

[*There is a knock at the door. Marjorie goes to open it, and sees Mrs. Inez Brown.*]

**Inez.** Good-morning, Mrs. Gates!

**Marjorie.** Oh, Mrs. Brown, I am so glad to see you! Come right in, please.

**Inez.** [*Stepping inside the door.*] Thanks; but I can't stay long for I've got to give a lecture at our club, this afternoon.

**Marjorie.** I do wish you'd look at my baby.

**Inez.** [*Cheerfully.*] What's the matter with the baby? Is she sick? [*They both go to the cradle and bend over the doll. Inez puts her hand on the doll's head.*]

**Marjorie.** She cried all night.

**Inez.** [*Feeling the doll's pulse.*] She's a very, very sick child. I think she has measles, scarlet fever, whooping-cough, and mumps.

**Marjorie.** [*Catches doll up in her arms, sinks into the chair and begins to rock and cry.*] Oh, my poor baby is going to die! I just know she can't live another year.

**Inez.** Don't be silly! Why don't you do something for her? [*Heats a blanket and wraps it around the doll.*] Here, give her to me. She's more comfortable in bed. [*Takes the doll and puts her back in the cradle.*]

**Marjorie.** [*Still crying.*] I've always known something dreadful would happen to her.

**Inez.** How silly these young mothers are! When you've raised ten children as I have, Mrs. Gates, you won't spend your time crying over a little thing like this.

**Marjorie.** [*Wiping her eyes.*] If I had ten children, I wouldn't mind losing a few of them.

**Inez.** Well, we must have a doctor. Can you stay alone until I bring doctor Woodbridge?

**Marjorie.** Yes, but oh, do hurry!

**Inez.** [*Going out door, puts her head in for a parting command.*] Now, don't take her out of that cradle, and do keep her covered up.

[**Marjorie** rocks the cradle, tucks up the doll, gets a bottle of hot water for her feet, and binds a handkerchief around her head. While she is busy, there is a rap on the door, and **Inez** and **Olive** enter without waiting for her to open the door.]

**Olive.** Good-morning, Mrs. Gates. Mrs. Brown tells me you have a sick baby.

**Marjorie.** [*Beginning to cry again.*] Oh, doctor, I just know she's going to die!

**Olive.** Oh, I guess not. [*All three girls bend over the sick doll.*]

**Inez.** Well, doctor, what do you think ails her?

**Olive.** A dreadful case of membranous croup.

**Marjorie.** [*Screams and sinks in a little heap on the floor.*] Oh! Oh! Oh!

**Inez.** [*Nodding her head.*] I thought all the time that it was something like that.

**Olive.** We must have an operation.

**Marjorie.** [*Rocking back and forth on the floor.*] It will kill her!

**Inez.** Nonsense, she'll hardly feel it. I've had some sort of an operation performed on nearly all of my children.

**Olive.** [*Doubtfully.*] I'm not sure that I can save her, but I'll do my best. While there's life, there's hope, you know. [*Opens medicine*



*case, and takes out carving knife and fork, some bottles and napkins.]*

**Marjorie.** I can't let you do it.

**Olive.** [*To Inez.*] Put her out doors, then come back and help me. [*Inez helps Marjorie up, and escorts her to the door.*]

**Inez.** [*To Olive.*] Now, doctor, what do you want me to do?

**Olive.** Hold the patient's head. [*Inez holds doll's head, and cries for the baby, when Olive pretends to cut its throat. Then it is carefully bandaged and tucked up.*]

**Olive.** A most successful operation.

**Inez.** Will she live?

**Olive.** Live? Of course she will.

**Inez.** Then I'll call the mother. [*Goes to door.*] Mrs. Gates, it's all over.

**Olive.** It's all right, you mean.

**Marjorie.** Is she alive?

**Olive.** Alive and well. [*Marjorie hurries to cradle. Inez follows. All bend over the doll, then turn, and taking hold of hands, bow to the audience.*]

**The three girls in chorus.** Ladies and gentlemen, there is no longer a sick doll.

# THE QUARREL.

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS.

BERNICE.

FRANCES.

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This play will be found suitable for quite small children, and can easily be taught them by an older brother or sister. Children who own a set of dishes, little kindergarten chairs, and a table, can find a new interest in their possessions by playing with them as suggested in the following dialogue.

Plays eight minutes.

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[*Enter Bernice, carrying a part of her little teaset. She places the dishes on a chair, while she pulls out the table and spreads a table-cloth upon it.*]

**Bernice.** [*Talking as she works.*] Of course I had to bring in the dishes before the table was ready for them! That is just like me! I always do things backwards when I am in a hurry. [*Places the dishes on the table, then*

*stands back a little way to look at them.]* They look pretty well! Sister Frances doesn't have prettier dishes than mine, if she does have other things that are nicer. [*Goes out, returning with more dishes.*] It seems to me it is time for her to be coming.

[*There is a knock at the door, and Frances enters without waiting to have the door opened.*]

**Frances.** How do you do, to-day? [*Bows.*]

**Bernice.** [*Going to meet her.*] I'm so glad you have come! Are you cold?

**Frances.** Not very. I walked fast.

[*Bernice helps Frances take off her wraps, then gives her the rocking chair, after which she carries the wraps away, laying them on a chair at the farther end of the room.*]

**Bernice.** Did you leave the little folks all well?

**Frances.** Well, and in school. How is your family?

**Bernice.** Very well, thank you. They've all gone to town, to-day. Now, if you'll excuse me, I'll put dinner on the table.

**Frances.** Of course I'll excuse you. Don't make company of me.

[*Bernice goes out, returning quickly with plates of food. While she is gone, Frances rocks and looks around the room, curiously.*]

**Frances.** [*To audience.*] I'm glad I have some things nicer than Bernice.

**Bernice.** [*Arranging dishes of food on the table.*] This seems just like old times, doesn't it?

**Frances.** Yes, we'll make believe we're little girls playing together in mamma's house.

**Bernice.** Now, Frances, if you'll sit here, please—

**Frances.** Thank you. [*Takes the chair Bernice has drawn out for her, then Bernice sits opposite her at the table.*]

**Bernice.** I'm going to help you to some of this meat, for I am sure you'll like it. [*Puts meat on the plate before her, then passes it to Frances, who gives her own plate in exchange.*] Won't you have some bread? [*Passes bread, then pours the tea.*]

**Frances.** [*Tasting the meat.*] How very nice this is! You always cook meat so much better than I do.

**Bernice.** But I can't make such good bread as yours. [*Passes other dishes.*]

**Frances.** You always get your work done so quickly! My house is nearly always upset.

**Bernice.** But your sewing is never behind, as mine is,—sometimes.

**Frances.** Sometimes! [*Laughs.*] Oh, Bernice, did you ever have it done ahead of time?

**Bernice.** [*Holding her head very high.*] If I were as poor a housekeeper as you are, I wouldn't say a word.

**Frances.** [*Rising.*] I can see that it is time for me to go. [*Gets wraps, and begins to put them on.*]

**Bernice.** [*Rising.*] And if you ever come

again, do try and be polite. [*Starts to help Frances put her wraps on, but Frances jerks away from her.*]

**Frances.** [*Going toward door.*] Be polite! Oh, yes! I'll copy you, dear.

**Bernice.** [*Following her.*] Really, you might do worse.

[*Just as Frances starts to shut the door behind her, she looks back, and sees Bernice brushing her hand across her eyes. She hurries back, and throws both arms around Bernice, who returns the embrace.*]

**Frances.** What silly girls we are!

**Bernice.** I didn't mean a word of it.

**Frances.** Neither did I. Won't you come part way home with me?

[*They go out together.*]



# THE SCHOOL ENTERTAINMENT.

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS.

### THE TEACHER.

INEZ BROWN.	HARLAND HOYT.
HAZEL HOYT.	PLINY DAGGETT.
BERNICE WOODWARD.	ROSALIE MERRIMAN.
FRANCES WOODWARD.	DOROTHY WOODWARD.
MARIE HOYT.	MARIAN DAGGETT.

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This play was written for a group of cousins composed of two boys and eight girls, and for an older child, who took the part of teacher. The teacher may be either a boy or a girl. Some of the children were quite small when the play was prepared and so their parts were made very easy. This will be appreciated in families where there are young children who are old enough to protest against being left out. If the play is to be given where there are not so many children, it will not be a difficult matter to leave out one or two parts entirely, or, some of the larger children may take two parts under one name.

Before beginning the play, the chairs must be arranged in one end of the room to resemble the seats in a school-room. A table and bell for the teacher must also be supplied. When the children have entered the room they must try to think and to do some of the many little things usually done by very mischievous pupils, such as throwing paper balls, playing with tiny dolls when the teacher is not looking, etc. They must be careful, however, not to make a commotion when anything is being said that the audience ought to hear.

Plays twenty-five minutes.

---

[*Enter Teacher, evidently in a great hurry. She looks at her watch, then hastily takes off her wraps and puts them away while she talks.*]

**Teacher.** How late it is! Ten minutes past one already. I do hope my pupils will not guess that I am tardy. They would never be on time again if they did. [*Smooths her hair, then takes a bell from the table goes to the door and rings it.*] I am glad we are to have pieces to-day instead of the regular recitations. [*Pupils come in laughing and jostling one another.*] There! There! not so much noise, if you please. There will be no time for play to-morrow, if you are not good to-day.

**Inez.** Teacher, Harland hit me.

**Harland.** Didn't, no such thing! Anyhow, she hit me first.

**Teacher.** Harland, you and Inez may stay after school to-night. We will have a talk about this hitting business. [**Harland and Inez take seats and all the others follow, except Hazel and Pliny, who come in late.**]

**Hazel.** Teacher, Pliny kissed me. I don't like it.

**Teacher.** Pliny, why did you do that?

**Pliny.** Because she dared me to. She said I dassent.

**Teacher.** Hazel and Pliny may also remain after school to-night. I want it to be understood that there is to be no kissing in this school. [**Hazel and Pliny take seats.**]

**Rosalie.** But I want to kiss Dorothy Woodward.

**Dorothy.** And I want to kiss Rosalie Meriman.

**Teacher.** Little girls may kiss each other, and so may little boys; but boys can't kiss girls—

**Harland.** I could if it wasn't against the rule. [*Pupils giggle and nudge one another.*]

**Teacher.** Silence! And girls can't kiss boys.

**Marie.** Can't I kiss brother Harland?

**Teacher.** Of course; the rule don't hold with brothers and sisters.

**Marie.** But I want to kiss Pliny, too.

**Teacher.** Well, cousins don't count.

**Pliny.** If—if you please, I think I'd like to kiss Bernice once in a while.

**Bernice.** My auntie is Pliny's auntie, too. Of course we're cousins—

**Pliny.** And cousins don't count.

**Teacher.** We won't talk about this any more at present. Children never seem to understand anything.

**Frances.** [*Holding up her hand.*] Please may I pass the water?

**Teacher.** No; you have not been in the house long enough to be thirsty.

**Frances.** But I was thirsty when I came in.

**Dorothy.** So was I.

**Rosalie.** I'm thirsty, too.

**Teacher.** It serves you all just right. I hope it will teach you to take a drink at the pump before you come in.

**Inez.** We couldn't.

**Teacher.** Why not?

**Inez.** I can't tell, but we couldn't. [*Winks at Harland.*]

**Harland.** Inez thinks I'm afraid. It's because I lost the dipper.

**Inez.** I helped him lose it. We were playing in the brook, and it floated off.

**Teacher.** Harland and Inez must stay after school to-night.

**Harland.** How can I stay twice?

**Inez.** [*In a loud whisper.*] Hush, Harland! We'll do two stays in one. [*Both giggle.*]

**Marian.** [*Who has been bending over her slate.*] Teacher, I can't work this example.

**Teacher.** Read it aloud.

**Marian.** If a dog eats five doughnuts in three minutes, how many apples can a horse eat in one minute?

**Teacher.** Is that example in your book?

**Marian.** No, Inez gave it to me.

**Teacher.** You and Inez may remain after school to-night.

**Inez.** Why? Isn't it a good example?

**Teacher.** No, it is not.

**Inez.** Then I'll tell Uncle Frank not to give me another one. I'll tell him you said so.

**Teacher.** Tell him nothing of the sort. It is good enough for him.

**Harland.** Uncle Frank ought to have just as good things as anyone else; just let me tell you that!

**Marian.** I won't go to school to you if you talk about my Uncle Frank.

**Inez.** Nor I; folks, let's all go home. [*Inez leaves her seat, and the others follow her example.*]

**Teacher.** Don't be silly! Sit down, and I'll explain. [*Pupils resume their seats.*] You ought to know that what is good for grown folks is not always good for children. For instance, it is good for your Uncle Frank to shave his face; but would it be good for you? [*Pupils feel their chins and laugh.*]

**Harland.** Well, no, not just to-day.

**Hazel.** It would never be very good for me.

**Teacher.** Well, now you understand; Harland need not work such examples until he is older, and Hazel need never work them unless she wants to. Do you see?

**Pupils.** Yes! yes! it's all right.

**Teacher.** We will now begin the entertainment for the afternoon. I hope you have all



come prepared. If you like such exercises, we will have them every Friday afternoon, instead of our regular exercises.

**Bernice.** That will suit me.

**Pliny.** Me too.

[*Teacher gets out a programme, and seats herself beside a table.*]

**Teacher.** We will now hear from Inez Brown.

**Inez.** [*Rising and bowing.*]

As I stood on the doorstep one morning in May,

I noticed that Brave very quietly lay

With his head on his paws. Now that isn't the way

He usually does when I want him to play.

He looked up when I spoke. There were tears in his eyes.

They made me quite sad, for Brave seldom cries.

When I asked him what ailed him, he spoke in this wise:

"Miss Inez," he said, "is it true as I hear,

That the baby's a boy? It is? Oh, dear, dear!

And now you are laughing. I feared that you would.

But really, dear friend, I can't see why you should.

If you were a dog, you would learn very quick

That girls are less apt to get angry and kick.

They don't hitch wagons to you, then get in and ride,  
And compel you to run till you ache in your side;

Or play you're a camel, putting humps on your back  
Composed of two cats tied up in a sack;

Or get up a circus, with you for a horse,  
And go through their antics on your back, of course.

I tell you most dogs feel more sorrow than joy,  
When told 'tis a fact that the baby's a boy."

[*Inez takes her seat. The boys hiss while the girls clap their hands.*]

**Teacher.** Quiet! Be quiet, children.

**Harland.** That piece Inez spoke is no good.

**Marian.** It is good. It is fine.

**Teacher.** Children, listen! If you are not quiet, I'll keep everyone of you after school.  
[*Children become very quiet.*] We will now hear from Hazel Hoyt.

**Hazel.** [*Standing.*]

There was a little doggie,  
And he had a little tail,  
And a naughty boy tied on it  
A very large tin pail.  
Then the doggie ran so swiftly,  
In hopes the string would break,  
That he stretched out like a clothesline,  
And they killed him for a snake.

[*Hazel takes her seat, the pupils laugh and clap their hands, and the Teacher raps on the table for order.*]

**Teacher.** Harland Hoyt comes next on the list.

**Harland.** [*Standing.*]

Once a little cat said, "Mew, mew! Mew, mew!  
I don't know what in the world to do,  
For the mice are so spry, that, though hard I may try,  
Away they will run, and I cannot get one.  
And while I was sleeping so sweetly, to-day,  
I was wakened by hearing the housekeeper say,  
That that lazy, good-for-nothing old cat  
Has never yet caught a mouse or a rat,  
And had better be put where the water was deep.  
So now I must hunt when I'd much rather sleep.  
Cats are like girls, as every one knows,  
They won't work till they must for food or for clothes.

[*Harland nods triumphantly to Inez as he takes his seat, the girls hiss and Pliny claps his hands loudly.*]

**Marian.** Oh, Harland, you made the last of

that up right out of your own head. I know your piece and that wasn't in it

**Harland.** I got ahead of Inez anyhow.

**Inez.** There is another day coming

**Teacher.** [*Rapping on her desk with her ruler.*] Will—you—keep—quiet? We will now hear from Pliny Daggett.

**Pliny.** [*Standing.*]

"Oh, mamma dear," a little pup said

"I had such a dream, last night, in bed,

Perhaps you can tell me what it means

To dream of a long row of sausage machines."

The mother replied, leaning against a log,

"You have dreamed of the final end of dog."

[*Pliny takes his seat, while all the children laugh and clap their hands.*]

**Frances.** I won't eat any more sausage.

**Teacher.** Hush! We will now hear from Bernice Woodward.

**Bernice.** [*Standing.*]

I suppose everybody gets punished

Once in a while; don't you?

Frances and I get it seldom,

But there are times when we do.

You see, when mamma is reading,

And sister and I are not good,

She makes us stand up beside her,

Real still, just like two sticks of wood,

And we stand very still for a moment,

But it seems like an hour and a half;

Then sister hits me, and I giggle,

And I pinch her, then I laugh.

I don't know what is the reason

That we can't keep still when we try,

Or why mamma don't think we'er punished

Until we begin to cry.

[*Bernice takes her seat.*]

**Harland.** It is because you are not sorry until you are ready to cry.

**Bernice.** Don't you suppose I know that? I had to say what was in the verse, you know.

**Teacher.** There, there, children, no quarreling. Bernice, you spoke your piece very nicely, indeed. We will next have one from Frances Woodward.

**Frances,** [*Standing.*]

Bernice spoke a piece for us both, to-day  
And so, dear friends, I will only say  
That the way to grow better is just to be good.  
I know, for I've always behaved as I should.

[*Frances turns and bows to the pupils before taking her seat.*]

**Pupils.** [*In chorus.*] Oh, hear her! Hear her! She isn't a bit better than we are.

**Teacher.** Less noise. If you are not quiet, instantly, you must all stay after school. Marie Hoyt will now speak her piece.

**Marie.** [*Standing,*]

Once two little mice saw a great big rat.  
Said one little mouse, "I wonder what's that."  
Said t'other little mouse, "You really ought to know;  
That's a great giant mouse, who can kill us with a  
blow."

[*Marie takes her seat, and the children clap their hands.*]

**Teacher.** That was very well done for so little a girl. I shouldn't be surprised if the youngest ones did the best, taking every-

thing into consideration. Let us try another of our small class. We will now hear from Rosalie Merriman.

**Rosalie.** [*Standing.*]

Once, two little birdies wanted to play,  
But they couldn't, because it rained all day.

[**Rosalie runs to Marian**, hiding her face on **Marian's shoulder**, while the others cheer her.]

**Teacher.** Very good, Rosalie. We will hear from Dorothy Woodward, next.

**Dorothy.** [*Standing.*]

I can't speak pieces. I'm too small,  
And so, I will not try at all.  
But this I'll say before I'm done,  
I love you, cousins, every one.

[**Dorothy runs to Inez**, while the children cheer her.]

**Teacher.** For a little girl who could not speak at all, I think you did very nicely, indeed. We will now hear what Marian Daggett has to say.

**Marian.** [*Standing.*]

Little girls and little boys,  
Full of mischief, fun, and noise,  
Tell me, quickly, tell me true,  
If through all the day you do  
Anything to help your mother.  
Do you care for baby brother?  
Do you help to sweep the floors?  
Do you carry slops out doors?  
Do you set and clear the table,  
Just as well as you are able?  
Do you bring in wood and water?



Do you, little son and daughter?  
Mother works so hard for you,  
That you should really try to do  
Something for her every day,  
And not spend all your time in play.

[**Marian** takes her seat while the children applaud.]

**Teacher.** [*Rising.*] You have done nicely, children, and I am much pleased with you. Indeed, I am so well pleased that I have decided to forgive you all, and not keep anyone after school to-night.

[*Taps the bell and the children rise. Taps it again, and they march out, cheering, upon Harland's suggestion.*]

**Harland.** Three cheers for the teacher.

[*All cheer.*]

**Teacher.** [*Getting her wraps.*] Oh, dear, I believe I was never so tired in my life. It is such hard work teaching school. I presume there are people who would watch me, and think it was no work at all, but I just wish they'd try it once. [*Puts on her wraps and goes to the door, turning to say to the audience.*] If we have not done well, it is not because we have not tried.



## A MOTHER GOOSE COMEDY.

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### CAST OF CHARACTERS.

MISS MUFFETT.  
MRS. JACK SPRATT.

JACK SPRATT.  
KING COLE.

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An illustrated copy of The Mother Goose Melodies will give the little folks suggestions as to the dress required to properly personate the characters called for. For instance, Old King Cole should wear a small pillow over his stomach to make him fat and jolly in appearance. He ought, also, to have a white mustache curled up at the corners, and his hair should be well powdered. Jack Spratt should be tall, thin and melancholy in appearance. If he can get an old-fashioned coat that belonged to his grandfather, one so long that the tails nearly touch the floor, he will do nicely as to costume. Mrs. Jack Spratt should also be dressed to appear very fat, while the character of Miss Muffett should be taken by a little girl, considerably smaller than the other children.

Plays twenty minutes.

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[*Enter Miss Muffett with a bowl of popcorn and milk to represent a dish of curds and*

*whey. She walks slowly toward the centre of the room, where she seats herself on one end of a soap box, that has been covered with a quilt to look like a low couch, and at once begins eating.]*

**Miss Muffett.** Such a day as this has been! Perfectly dreadful! It really has robbed me of my appetite. [*Eats very fast.*] I can hardly swallow these curds; they almost choke me. [*Eats the last spoonful of popcorn, then lifts the bowl to her lips and drinks the milk.*] There! I did manage to eat it all, but I really thought it would kill me. [*Tries to get another drop of milk from the bowl.*] I never have an appetite when I am worried. [*Licks her spoon.*] And this has been such a dreadful day. [*Tries once more to get a little milk from the bowl.*]

[*Enter Jack Spratt, who walks in slowly, holding his handkerchief before his eyes as if crying. He does not appear to see Miss Muffett, even when he seats himself on the other end of the box. Miss Muffett catches sight of him and jumps up, screaming. Jack Spratt looks at her, jumps up, and they stand facing each other.*]

**Jack Spratt.** Great Scott! What's the matter? Is it you Miss Muffett? Did you scream? If so, why? If not, what did you do?

**Miss Muffett.** [*With excitement.*] Oh, Mr. Spratt! Oh, I'm afraid I did scream. Oh, how you did frighten me! Oh! Oh! I don't

know why I say oh so many times.

**Jack Spratt.** [*Gravely.*] It is because you have been making buttonholes. Miss Muffett, why did you scream?

**Miss Muffett.** Why? Oh, I—I—I thought you were a horrid spider.

**Jack Spratt.** [*Angrily.*] Indeed! Much obliged, I'm sure.

**Miss Muffett.** [*Holds out her hands to Jack as he turns away.*] Don't be angry. You know I didn't say it because you are so painfully thin. [**Jack walks faster toward the door.**] Please Mr. Spratt! Don't mind what I say. I'm not myself. I have been nervous ever since that horrid, great spider—[*Begins to cry aloud.*]

**Jack Spratt.** [*Stops with his hand on the door knob, then turns and comes toward her.*] Of course! I had forgotten about that spider. I remember how dreadfully it frightened you.

**Miss Muffett.** [*Still sobbing.*] And you always think everyone is trying to hurt your feelings. I've got feelings, too.

**Jack Spratt.** To tell the truth, I've had a very trying day, and my nerves are completely worn out. Please be seated and let me tell you about it. [*They sit together on the box.*]

**Miss Muffett.** It will do you good to tell some one. It always helps me to tell about that spider, who sat down beside her.

**Jack Spratt.** You know my wife has been trying out lard for the last three days, and she is determined that none of the scraps shall be wasted—



**Miss Muffett.** Well, she can eat them, can't she? She likes fat meat.

**Jack Spratt.** She can't very well eat them all, and she won't cook any other meat until they are gone. Now, I'm actually suffering for a little lean meat. I am weak and empty and nervous and—oh, dear, I'm just all to pieces.

**Miss Muffett.** [*Jumps up.*] Mr. Jack Spratt, I have a glorious idea! Mother Hubbard's dog—

**Jack Spratt.** [*Jumps up.*] Yes, yes! The dog.

**Miss Muffett.** [*Placing her hands to her lips.*] Hush! Not a word. Trust me! I'll manage it. [*Hurries out of the room.* **Jack** throws himself on the box and falls asleep.]

[*Enter Mrs. Spratt, running. She has an apron thrown over her head.*]

**Mrs. Spratt.** [*Calling.*] Jack! Jack Spratt! Oh, where are you! There he is, asleep, as usual. [*Hastens to Jack and begins to shake him.*] Wake up, Jack. Something dreadful has happened!

**Jack Spratt.** [*Rubs his eyes sleepily.*] Eh? What did you say?

**Mrs. Spratt.** Your nephew has broken his crown. Your nephew, Jack! The one who is named for you.

**Jack Spratt.** [*Sitting up.*] Jack broke his crown!

**Mrs. Spratt.** He went with Jill to get a pail of water and fell down—

**Jack Spratt.** [*Jumping up excitedly.*] Where

is he? Where is he? Take me to him. [*Starts toward the door.*]

**Mrs. Spratt.** [*Following Jack and talking, excitedly.*] Jack fell down and broke his crown, and Jill came tumbling after, and no one knows how badly she's hurt.

**Jack Spratt.** [*Stops suddenly, and puts his hands to his ears as if listening.* **Mrs. Spratt** bumps up against him.] What is that? Do I hear the bell?

**Mrs. Spratt.** [*Giving Jack a push.*] Go on. Yes, Nell is ringing the bell. Jane told her to.

**Jack Spratt.** Then Jack and Jill are dying. [*They both disappear through the door.*]

[*Enter Miss Muffett.*]

**Miss Muffett.** Jack! Oh, Jack Spratt! I've arranged it! Mother Hubbard's dog hasn't had dyspepsia for a week, and—[*Looks closely at the box, as if Jack might be concealed near it.*] Why, where is Jack Spratt? Is he hiding? [*Looks behind the chairs.*] He's smart to run away when I agreed to help him get rid of that fat meat. [*Hearty laughter is heard outside the door.*] Who is that? The voice sounds familiar. [*The door opens slowly, and a laughing, red face appears.*] Oh, it is Old King Cole.

**King Cole.** [*Coming into the room.*] Tut, tut, my dear, don't you call me old. A fellow can't be older than his heart is. [*Dances up to the centre of room, and puts his arms around Miss Muffett.*] Come on, my dear, I'm dying to dance.

**Miss Muffett.** [*Breaking away.*] But I don't know how to dance, and if I did, I wouldn't—

**King Cole.** [*Laughing.*] Oh, yes you would, my dear! You'd dance with me in a minute. All the girls like to dance with me. [*Puts his hands to his mouth, and makes a sound as if blowing a horn.*] Hello! Hello! Hello! Music! Music! Fiddlers wanted! [*Enter musician.*]

[*The boy who takes the part of Jack Spratt can also take that of the musician. Anything in the way of music can be brought in, from a comb with a paper over it, to a violin. Musician plays a dance tune.*]

**King Cole.** See here, Miss Muffett. This is the way to do it. [*Dances a minute or two, then holds out his hands to Miss Muffett.*] Will you dance with me?

**Miss Muffett.** [*Holds out her hands, as if tempted to dance with him, then draws them back quickly, clasps them behind her, and shakes her head decidedly.*] No, King Cole, I can't dance to-day.

**King Cole.** Cannot dance to-day? I should like to know why not.

**Miss Muffett.** Because I'm worried. [*Begins walking the floor with her head bent and a very troubled expression in her face.*] I was never so worried in all my life.

**King Cole.** [*Walks backward just in front of her, so as to look into her face.*] Worried?

What worries you? What right have you to worry?

**Miss Muffett.** I have just given all of Mrs. Spratt's pork scraps to Mother Hubbard's dog.

**King Cole.** [*Catching Miss Muffett by the shoulder, speaks with excitement.*] You have! Were there many of them? Speak, girl. Quick, as you value your life.

**Miss Muffett.** Don't take my head off. What a fuss you make! There were only a bushel of them.

**King Cole.** A bushel! The dog will kill himself. He has had nothing to eat for a week! Girl, what have you done! [*Shakes Miss Muffett.*] The dog will die of indigestion,—unless I can reduce those scraps. [*Rushes wildly from room.*]

**Miss Muffett.** [*Feels of her shoulders, then of her head and neck to see that she has not been shaken to pieces, then seats herself on the box and begins to cry.*] Oh dear, I'm always in trouble! [*Sobs aloud.*] I try to help everybody, [*Sobs.*] yet everything I do is wrong. [*Sobs.*] I don't see as it would make much difference if the old dog did die!

[*Enter Jack Spratt, with a bag slung across his shoulder. He is hurrying across the stage, when Miss Muffett accosts him.*]

**Miss Muffett.** [*Looking up, dries her eyes on her dress skirt.*] Jack Spratt! [*Calling*] Oh, Jack Spratt, where are you going?

**Jack Spratt.** [*Coming toward her, holds one*



*finger to his lips, and looks around stealthily.*] Hush! not a word! As you value your life never let it be known that you have seen me here.

**Miss Muffet.** But why? [**Jack turns to go away.**] Hold on Jack Spratt. What have you in that bag?

**Jack Spratt.** Hush! Therein lies the secret. [*In a loud whisper.*] It is Mother Hubbard's dog. They would kill you if they knew. I'll save you, if I can

**Miss Muffet.** [*In a loud whisper.*] Is he dead?

**Jack Spratt.** Dead as a door nail.

**Miss Muffett.** Did the scraps kill him?

**Jack Spratt.** [*Solemnly.*] The scraps killed him. Never let anyone know you saw me. [*Passes out through a different door from that he entered.*]

**Miss Muffett.** [*To audience.*] Isn't that just my luck! What do you suppose will happen next? Could I be arrested if it were found out? Could I be hung for murder?

[*Enter Mrs. Spratt, crying*]

**Miss Muffett.** [*Going to meet her, puts one arm about her, and they walk slowly toward the centre of the room as they talk.*] Dear Mrs Spratt, what is the matter? Don't cry; please don't. Can't you tell me what grieves you?

**Mrs. Spratt.** [*Sobbing.*] Have you, oh, have you seen my dear husband?

**Miss Muffett.** [*Winking and nodding at*



*audience.*] My dear madam, why should you think I have seen your dear husband?

**Mrs. Spratt.** [*Crossly.*] I don't think. I merely asked a question.

**Miss Muffett.** [*Suavely.*] It was a very foolish question.

**Mrs. Spratt.** [*Stops suddenly and glares at Miss Muffett suspiciously.*] It seems to me you have a queer way of answering a woman who is old enough to be your mother. [*Begins to talk very loudly.*] Now, Miss Impertinence, what I want to know is this. Have you seen Jack Spratt? Yes or no?

**Miss Muffett.** [*Also talking very loudly.*] No, I have not seen Jack Spratt. [*To audience.*] I'm sorry, but I had to lie about it.

**Mrs. Spratt.** [*Begins crying again.*] Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Jack and Jill are dying, and now my husband is going to be arrested—

**Miss Muffett.** Arrested! What for?

**Mrs. Spratt.** For murdering Mother Hubbard's dog.

**Miss Muffett.** But he didn't do it.

**Mrs. Spratt.** Of course he didn't; but who will believe that?

**Miss Muffett.** Who says he did it?

**Mrs. Spratt.** Tommy Tucker, Humpty Dumpty, Tom the Piper's Son, Jack Horner and oh, ever so many! They say he was seen putting the dead dog into a bag.

**Miss Muffett.** That is no sign he killed it.

**Mrs. Spratt.** Of course it isn't. Do you know who killed it?

**Miss Muffett.** Why should I know?

**Mrs. Spratt.** [*Loudly.*] Do—you—know—who—killed—that—dog?

**Miss Muffett.** [*Loudly.*] I—do—not—know—who—killed—that—dog [*To audience.*] Another lie, but I had to do it?

**Mrs. Spratt.** [*Tragically.*] Girl, let me tell you this: Jack Spratt did not kill that dog! He never had spunk enough to kill anything. A man who never eats anything but lean meat never had spunk enough to kill anything. If he put the dog into a bag, it was because he wished to shield some one else. Girl, listen to what I say. I'll hunt this wide world over, but I'll find the real criminal before I die. [*Goes off the stage in the same direction taken by Jack.*]

**Miss Muffett.** [*To audience.*] Now, I am in a pickle. If I say I did it, I'll be arrested; if I keep still, they'll arrest Jack Spratt. Now, the question is, which of us is of the most use to the world at large. No, that is not the question. It is this: What right have I to suffer for Jack Spratt? I did it to help him. Why shouldn't he suffer instead of me? I didn't care about those scraps. I didn't have to eat them. Jack said he should die if he didn't have lean meat, and he couldn't have lean meat until those scraps were gone. If I had not interfered, he would likely have been dead by this time, and he should thank me for giving him so much longer life. On the whole, I think I shall keep still.

[*Enter Mrs. Spratt running.*]

**Mrs. Spratt.** They've got him! They've got him! They caught him burying the dog. They are taking him to jail, now. [*Wrings her hands.*] Oh, my poor Jack! My poor Jack! How I wish I had never tried to make him eat that meat. [*Falls upon the box and looks at the audience mournfully.*] If he is hung there will be no one left to eat the bits of lean in the meat I cook. There is always a little lean in every piece. [*Rocks her body to and fro, moaning dismally, and every moment or two wiping a tear from her cheeks.*]

**Miss Muffett.** [*Who has been looking first at Mrs. Spratt then at the audience.*] I'm sorry for you. [*To audience.*] But I don't see how I can help her and be just to myself.

[*Enter King Cole, running and puffing.*]

**King Cole.** Where is she? Where is Mrs. Spratt?

**Mrs. Spratt.** [*Jumping up,*] Here I am.

**King Cole.** Where did Jack Spratt bury that dog?

**Mrs. Spratt.** [*Angrily.*] That is none of your business.

**King Cole.** It is my business, and yours, too. Listen! If we can try out oil from a dog that died of eating fat meat, we can cure Jack and Jill!

**Miss Muffett and Mrs. Spratt.** Cure Jack and Jill!

**King Cole.** [*Dancing around excitedly.*] Yes! Yes! Where is that dog?

**Miss Muffett.** [*Dancing around excitedly.*]

Yes! Yes! Where did he bury the dog?

**Mrs. Spratt.** [*Dancing around excitedly.*]  
I don't know! Why don't you ask him?

**King Cole.** The jailer won't let me speak to him, yet I might save his life.

**Miss Muffett.** [*Catching hold of King Cole's arm.*] How? How?

**Mrs. Spratt.** [*Catching hold of his other arm.*] Save him! Oh, save him, I pray you!

**King Cole.** [*Breaking loose from Miss Muffett.*] Mrs. Spratt, come with me. [*They run out of the room together.*]

**Miss Muffett.** [*To audience.*] I wonder how it will all end. How does this new move affect me? If the dog is found and fried into oil, and if the oil saves Jack and Jill, then, by killing the dog, I really save two human lives. What a noble girl I am! [*She is silent for a moment.*] I shall have saved two lives, but no one can ever know it, for everyone will think Jack Spratt did it! That's what I get for keeping still.

[*Enter Jack Spratt, Mrs Spratt, and King Cole, arm in arm, and all laughing and talking together as if very happy.*]

**King Cole.** Hurrah! Jack and Jill are well, and everybody is happy.

**Mrs. Spratt.** That husband of mine did kill the old dog, after all, and the mayor of this city has given him a hundred dollars for it.

**Miss Muffet.** One hundred dollars! What for?

**Mrs. Spratt.** Why, for killing the dog. The



mayor wanted him killed. It is like getting a hundred dollars for our pork scraps.

**King Cole.** And the relatives of Jack and Jill gave him another hundred.

**Jack Spratt.** [*Rubbing his right arm.*] And everyone wants to shake hands with me.

**King Cole.** Don't rub your arm. Think how you'd feel if your neck had been broken. All's well that ends well, old boy.

**Mrs. Spratt.** Yes, all's well that ends well. Come, let us celebrate. Three pounds of lean meat for Spratt, three pounds of fat for me! And you, King Cole?

**King Cole.** My pipe, please, with plenty of good tobac—no cubebs, and my bowl filled with—with lemonade.

**Mrs. Spratt.** And you, Miss Muffet? I stand treat for all, you know.

**Jack Spratt,** You stand treat, Mrs. Spratt?

**Mrs. Spratt.** What's yours, is mine, you know.

**Jack Spratt.** But it—ahem—isn't mine. I did not kill—

**Mrs. Spratt.** [*Sternly and shaking her fist in his face.*] Yes you did. Don't you dare to say you did not. [*Mrs. Spratt and King Cole drag Jack Spratt out of the room.*]

**Miss Muffet.** [*Looking after them.*] I seemed to have missed considerable money, but I don't know as I care. Poor Jack Spratt! Much good it will do him! Well, I guess I'll see how it ends. I might as well have my share of that treat. [*She goes toward the door through which the others have retreated. Just before*



*closing the door behind her, she puts her head into the room for a parting word with the audience.]*

**Miss Muffett.** [*To audience.*] They say all is well that ends well; but the question is, has this ended well?

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**Will You Marry Me?** Farce in one act, by Robert Julian, author of "Burglars." Two male, two female characters. Plays twenty minutes. Costumes of to-day for eccentric old gentleman, one maiden elderly lady, one young man and one young woman. One interior parlor scene. The plot is full of intensely amusing matrimonial complications, with a happy ending. The fun is about evenly divided among the four strong parts. Some clever acting is desired where the dialogue is repeated under contrasting circumstances, by different persons. Price, 15 cents.

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HANNAH MARY BARNES, or "Sis," a maiden lady who keeps house for her brother.....  
DWIGHT BRADLEY, a fortune hunter and Mrs. Halstead's son by a former marriage.....  
DR. BURTON, a young physician.....  
SAMMY, the darky bell-boy in the Halstead house.....  
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Time of playing, two hours.

Two interior scenes. Modern costumes.

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ACT. II. Kitchen of the Barnes' farm house, Bub takes off his boots. The new school ma'am. "Supper's ready." "This is our nephew and he's a doctor." Recognition. A difficult problem in arithmetic. The doctor to the rescue. "I'm just the happiest girl in the world." "I've come to pop the question, an' why don't I do it?" Brother and sister. "If it's a heifer, it's teh be mine." The sheriff. Arrested for stealing the diamonds. "Let me knock yer durned head off." The jewels found in Bernice's trunk.

ACT. III. Parlor of the Halstead home. "That was a lucky stroke—hiding those diamonds in her trunk." The schemer's plot miscarries. Abe and Sammy join hands. The lawyer. "Bully for her." Bradley tries to escape. "No, yeh don't!" Arrested. "It means, dear, that you are to be persecuted no more." Wedding presents, and a war dance around them. "It is no trick at all to fool a young doctor."

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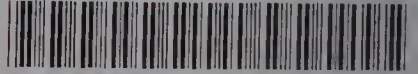








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